THREE CENTURIES
OF
AMERICAN POETRY AND PROSE

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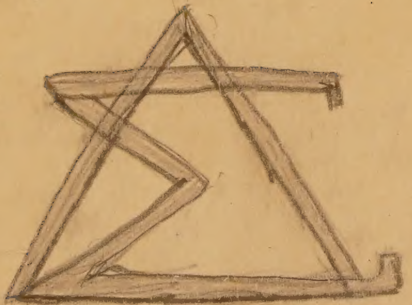

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THREE CENTURIES

OF

AMERICAN POETRY AND PROSE

SELECTED AND EDITED

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PREFACE

The fact that *Twelve Centuries of English Poetry and Prose* supplied a real need in schools and colleges prompted the editors to compile the present companion volume of American literature. It may be granted that the ideal method of studying literature is through reading authors from complete editions; the mere thumbing through of the author's whole work gives the student a valuable perspective of the particular part he is reading. But every teacher knows that except with the extraordinary coincidence of very small classes and very large libraries that ideal is unattainable. Even in our larger colleges and universities where, if anywhere, the ideal conditions might be found, books of selections representing periods of literary development are being used more and more for general courses in the history of literature, either as the basis of the student's reading or to supplement his reading in the library. The widening scope of the study of literature in kind and form makes necessary a compilation that will represent adequately both the greater authors of an epoch and also those minor authors whose work shows secondary but significant tendencies of their time. All this is the result of that view which takes literature to be not a thing apart from life, but an expression of all life, and would make its study a segment of the ever widening circle of human interests. It may be remarked in passing that the selections of the present book may be used as a valuable supplement in the direct study of American history and society.

In poetry the aim of the editors has been to place between the covers of a single volume the greater part of what will remain permanent in American poetry from its beginnings down to the end of the first great productive period in American literature. The chief poets are represented by selections intended to include much (in some cases all) of enduring worth in their work, and also to show their variety, versatility, and range. To other poets we have tried to accord space according to their importance; and a few appear whose work, though in itself of minor worth, reflects some broad phase of American life that should not be left out of account.

In prose the choice has naturally been more difficult than in poetry. Whenever possible we have used wholes; when this was not possible we have made selections that would show the author's purpose in the whole, and have above all tried to avoid the scrappiness and ineffectiveness of mere fragments. Of fiction it is impossible to represent in a single volume of this kind more than the necessary minimum. In the case of Irving and Hawthorne we have omitted some of the selections generally read in the grades, and easily found in cheap editions, for the sake of others not so common and yet notable in themselves.

The editors have thought it best to give considerable space to colonial writers and thus make the book useful in schools where students do not have access to large libraries, and where colonial authors before Franklin are not to be found. It is safe to say that few high schools have Mather, or Byrd, or Ward, or Sewall. In fact there are colleges and universities of respectable standing that do not afford their students access to these men. We have therefore included from such authors somewhat more proportionately than their mere artistic worth merits. Our object has been to give young people a chance to know with some degree of adequateness a period of national life that was the seed-time of national ideals. The editors firmly believe that to begin the study of American literature with Franklin is to miss some of the most interesting chapters of American life, interesting not only to mature minds able at once to see their significance in relation to the whole, but fascinating to young people to whom they are a discovery. In working over this literature at a time when the nation is conscious of its inner life as never before, when it is rising to justify that life before the world, we have come to feel more and more strongly that the best of the nineteenth century American literature is no weakling offshoot of English literature. It draws its life-currents from the American spirit of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Emerson and Hawthorne are not to be accounted for fundamentally by the awakening in the Old World. They profited by the genial culture of Europe current in their day, but their spiritual foundation was generations deep in American soil. We hope that these selections will show the unity and continuity of our national spirit as well as its vast changes.

In selecting the material from this early period one primary aim has been to choose what would arouse the student's natural interest. We have chosen units that will tell how the colonists came here, what they came for, of their fights with the Indians, their travails in the founding of a new civil community, of their social life and ideals, and of how at length they became aware of their artistic isolation and began to cultivate grace of expression. As social record these old books need no apology. Young people can scarcely fail to note the difference between the society of Boston as seen in the diary of Sewall, and that of Virginia as the Westover papers show it, nor will they be likely to miss the contrast between the crabbed puritanism of Ward and the expansive spirit of Williams that was destined to overcome it. We have generally avoided including anything merely because it was an attempt at art. To force upon young students as literature what our Puritan forebears put forward as such is too much like compelling them to admire as pictorial art the illustrations of the *New England Primer*. In the comparative and at times total absence of the esthetic, we have frankly put before students life, trusting that teachers will give it its proper perspective.

For the literature included under the heading National Period, no excuse that it represents the life of an important people in the making is needed. Too long has the tone of the academic expounder of American literature been modeled, unconsciously enough perhaps, on the critical formula provided by Hazlitt in speaking of Irving:

> ''He [Irving] gives us very good copies of our British essayists and novelists, which may be very well on the other side of the water, or as proof of the capabilities of the national genius, but which might be dispensed with here, where we have to boast of the originals.''

American literature, beginning with Irving, is not the product of immaturity, amateurism, and imitation; it has, as an acute American critic (Mr. James Lane Allen) has pointed out, something of the delicacy of outline and clarity of tone that mark French literature; if the possession of aesthetic sense be denied to Ann Bradstreet, it must be admitted in Poe; if our voice is crabbedly provincial and harsh in Wigglesworth, it is far-reaching and resonant in Emerson; if Charles Brockden Brown is experimental, Hawthorne is finely sure in touch. And even though American literature follows, as Mr. Allen believes, the feminine rather than the masculine model, even if, compared with the strong and inclusive virility of English letters, it seems somewhat thin, there are compensations and exceptions. Cooper, Mark Twain, and Whitman are no drawing-room products; and a type of insight and envisagement of life peculiarly our own seems to emerge from the collective American writings of the nineteenth century. Lest this be thought literary chauvinism, let it be admitted that American letters lack the scope, the broadly settled solidity of English letters, the penetrating white light of French letters. Still, no need to say ''a poor thing but mine own.'' Kipling's *An American* is rather an identification than an indictment, no matter what its author intended. And it may be noted that our literature, for all ''the cynic devil in its blood'' has held singularly true to respect for the careful workmanship that if long continued means artistic mastery, and to a veracious presentment of things as they have been—not as one would have wished them to be. Whatever qualifications the cautious critic may wish to urge, it remains true that the American literature of the National Period is independent and important.

The order in which authors appear is in general chronological, in respect to the decade or generation of their greatest influence, or that with which they are most naturally connected. It has seemed best, however, to place the orators and historians as much as possible in groups by themselves, and also to group writers to some extent geographically, as in the case of the southern authors. The individual productions of an author, we have tried to place in the order of writing, feeling that this sequence will be of most interest to the student. Where, however, as in the case of the Dante sonnets of Longfellow, and in the case of authors who wrote both poetry and prose, it has seemed best to violate this order, we have done so.

As far as possible we have attempted to give in italics following each selection the date of writing, and in ordinary numerals the date of publication. In many cases one or both of these dates will fail to appear, though we have used every means at our disposal to find them. We believe that the order is, however, substantially correct.

As in *Twelve Centuries of English Poetry and Prose*, we have placed the notes where they are most accessible, at the bottom of the page, believing that there is no particular virtue, per se, in the hiding of the notes or the search for them, and in thus adding to the temptation not to refer to them at all. We have not attempted to make the notes take the place of the dictionary; but where a word though familiar has an unusual sense, or where even with a dictionary the student might stumble, we have tried to supply the correct gloss. In all cases we have attempted to furnish the student with the condensed and pertinent information necessary to make the text intelligible, and by cross references to coördinate all material in the book. The biographical paragraphs preceding each author's work give only the facts of his life most needed in a study of his work. All critical estimate has intentionally been omitted.

In such a book as this, the form that a reprint should take is always a moot question. The old forms are a real bar to the ready apprehension of the thought. On the other hand, emendation and modernizing take from the text the evidence of the lingering medieval that was a real characteristic of the first generation of American life, north and south. We have deemed it best to modernize commonly, but to give a touch of the archaic by retaining the original spelling and punctuation in the selections from Smith, Strachey, Bradford, Mrs. Knight, and Nathaniel Ward. Even in these selections it did not seem best to reproduce such peculiarities of type as the long s's or the abbreviations so fantastic to modern eyes, and so misleading to the inexperienced reader.

It has been our misfortune, as it has that of other independent anthologists of American literature, to be restricted in our use of material written since the early seventies of the nineteenth century by limitations maintained by several publishers. We feel, however, that just as far as the copyright restrictions and the courtesy of publishers would allow us to proceed, we have placed in the hands of teachers and students a book representing the best in American literature.

In the labor of preparing this book we have had aid from many sources. First of all we would thank Professor Lindsay Todd Damon of Brown University, who as supervising editor has been of invaluable assistance. His criticism and suggestions regarding both subject matter and notes have been an asset not easily estimated. We would also thank colleagues and friends having access to special information useful in preparing the notes. We would especially thank Mr. Gerould, Librarian of the University of Minnesota; Dr. Solon J. Buck and Miss Jett of the Minnesota State Historical Society; Dr. Dawson Johnston, Mrs. Beals, and Miss Owens of the St. Paul Public Library; Miss Davis of the reference department of the Minneapolis Public Library; Mr. William C. Lane of the Harvard University Library; Mr. W. N. T. Carlton of the Newberry Library. We are indebted to Professor Firkins of the University of Minnesota for his kindness in furnishing the note on page 441; and to other friends who by suggestions and criticisms have aided in the work.

We gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to the Messrs. Harper and Brothers for permission to use George William Curtis's The Public Duty of Educated Men; to the Houghton Mifflin Company for permission to use from Whittier's works Prelude to Among the Hills, In School Days, My Triumph, John Underhill, Conductor Bradley, A Sea Dream, Sunset on the Bearcamp, The Trailing Arbutus, The Lost Occasion, and The King's Missive; from Longfellow's poems, Mezzo Cammin; from Jones Very's poems The Soldier, The Dead, The War, The Wild Rose of Plymouth; from the poems of Oliver Wendell Holmes Dorothy Q. and How the Old Horse Won the Bet; from the works of James Russell Lowell, After the Burial, In a Copy of Omar Khayyam, and ''Franciscus de Verulamio Sic Cogitavit''; to the Messrs. B. F. Johnson Publishing Company for permission to print from the poems of Henry Timrod, I Know Not Why, but All This Weary Day, Most Men Know Love but as a Part of Life, Charleston, Spring, The Cotton Boll, and Magnolia Cemetery; to the Messrs. P. J. Kenedy and Sons for permission to print from the poems of Abram J. Ryan, The Conquered Banner; to the Messrs. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Company for permission to use from the poems of Paul Hamilton Hayne, Shelley, Ode to Sleep, The Mocking Birds, Vicksburg, Aspects of the Pines, The Rose and Thorn, The Pine's Mystery, A Little While I Fain Would Linger Yet, and In Harbor; to the Messrs. Little, Brown and Company for permission to use parts of the copyrighted form of Edward Everett's Address on the Character of Washington, Charles Sumner's The True Grandeur of Nations, Margaret Junkin Preston's The Shade of the Trees, Helen Hunt Jackson's poems Spinning, October, and Coronation, and all the poems printed from Emily Dickinson; to Mrs. Janey Hope Marr of Norfolk, Virginia, for permission to print from the poems of her father James Barron Hope, Our Anglo-Saxon Tongue, Dreamers, and Under One Blanket; to Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons for permission to print the latest edition of all of Lanier's poems included in this book; to Mr. Horace Traubel for permission to print the poems of Walt Whitman here included.

The present volume was planned and some preliminary work done on it by the authors of *Twelve Centuries of English Poetry and Prose* before the lamented death of Professor Newcomer in 1913. The authorship as appears on the title page was subsequently agreed upon.

A. E. A.
H. J. H.

AUGUST, 1917.

A Companion Volume to this:

TWELVE CENTURIES
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ENGLISH POETRY AND PROSE
Newcomer and Andrews

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THREE CENTURIES OF AMERICAN POETRY AND PROSE

COLONIAL PERIOD

CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH

Born in Lincolnshire, 1580, died in London, 1631. His early life was that of an adventurer and soldier of fortune, during which he was captured by the Turks and sold into slavery. Escaping, he returned to England, sailed for Virginia in 1606, proved himself indispensable as a resourceful adviser, explorer, and military leader, and was made president of the colony in 1608. He explored the New England coast in 1614-15 and received the title of Admiral of New England. His works include *A True Relation,* 1608; *Description of New England,* 1616; *General History of Virginia and the Summer Isles,* 1624.

From A TRUE RELATION[1]

. . . You shall vnderstand that after many crosses in the downes by tempests, wee arriued safely vppon the Southwest part of the great Canaries: within foure or fiue daies after we set saile for *Dominica,* the 26. of Aprill: the first land we made, wee fell with Cape *Henry,* the verie mouth of the Bay of *Chissiapiacke,* which at that present we little expected, hauing by a cruell storme bene put to the Northward:

Anchoring in this Bay twentie or thirtie went a shore with the Captain, and in comming aboard[2] they were assalted with certaine Indians, which charged them within Pistoll shot: in which conflict, Captaine *Archer* and *Mathew Morton* were shot: wherupon Captaine *Newport* seconding them, made a shot at them, which the Indians little respected, but hauing spent their arrowes, retyred without harme. And in that place was the Box opened, wherin the Counsell for *Virginia* was nominated: and arriuing at the place where wee are now seated,[3] the Counsell was sworn, and the President elected, which for that yeare was Maister *Edm. Maria Wingfield,* where was made choice for our scituation, a verie fit place for the erecting of a great cittie, about which some contention passed betwixt Captaine *Wingfield* and Captaine *Gosnold:* notwithstanding, all our provision was brought a shore, and with as much speede as might bee wee went about our fortification.

The two and twenty day of Aprill,[4] Captain *Newport* and my selfe with diuers others, to the number of twenty two persons, set forward to discouer the Riuer, some fiftie or sixtie miles, finding it in some places broader, and in some narrower, the Countrie (for the moste part) on each side plaine high ground, with many fresh Springes, the people in all places kindely intreating vs, daunsing and feasting vs with strawberries, Mulberies, Bread, Fish, and other their Countrie prouisions wherof we had plenty: for which Captaine *Newport* kindely requited their least fauours with Bels, Pinnes, Needles, beades, or Glasses, which so contented them that his liberallitie made them follow vs from place to place, and euer kindely to respect vs. In the midway staying to refresh our selues in a little Ile, foure or fiue sauages came vnto vs which described vnto vs the course of the Riuer, and after in our iourney, they often met vs, trading with vs for such prouision as wee had, and ariuing at *Arsatecke,* hee whom we supposed to bee the chiefe King of all the rest, moste kindely entertained vs, giuing vs in a guide to go with vs vp the Riuer to *Powhatan,* of which place their great Emperor taketh his name, where he that they honored for King vsed vs kindely. But to finish this discouerie, we passed on further, where within an ile[5] we were intercepted with great craggy stones in the midst of the riuer, where the water falleth so rudely, and with such a violence, as not any boat can possibly passe, and so broad disperseth the streame, as there is not past fiue or sixe Foote at a low water, and to the shore scarce passage with a barge, the water floweth[6] foure foote, and the freshes, by reason of the Rockes, haue left markes of the inundations 8. or 9. foote: The south side is plaine low ground, and the north side high mountaines, the rockes being of a grauelly nature, interlaced with many vains of glistring spangles.

---

[1] A band of colonizers, among whom Captain Bartholomew Gosnold was the prime mover and Captain John Smith a leading spirit, having obtained letters patent from King James, set sail from Blackwall for Virginia, December 19, 1606. They were four months on the way, being kept for six weeks in The Downs, in sight of England, and afterward spending some time in Dominica and other islands of the West Indies. The orders for their government were put in a sealed box and opened on their arrival. The earliest account of their experiences was Smith's *True Relation,* published at London in black letter in 1608. It has been reprinted in Edward Arber's *English Scholar's Library,* with the original spelling here followed. The title page reads: A true relation of such occurrences and accidents of Noate as hath hapned in Virginia since the first planting of that Collony, which is now resident in the South part thereof, till the last returne from thence. Written by Captain Smith, Coronell of the said Collony, to a worshipfull friend of his in England.

Mr. Arber describes the *True Relation* as an "ordinary 'pamphlet of news,' carelessly printed." An example of this carelessness is the first sentence of the selection. It should read somewhat as follows: "Within four or five days after, we set sail for Dominica [where we stayed for some time]. The 26th of April, the first land we made, we fell with Cape Henry," etc.

[2] on land [3] settled (viz., at Jamestown)

[4] An error for May (1607). This date marks the beginning of Smith's explorations. As his map, published in 1612, shows, they covered Chesapeake Bay and all the important rivers from the James, "the River" here mentioned, to the Susquehanna, and led him to the future sites of Baltimore, Richmond and Washington. The places mentioned in the present selection are on or near the James, from Richmond to Point Comfort.

That night we returned to *Powhatan:* the next day (being Whitsunday after dinner) we returned to the fals, leauing a mariner in pawn with the Indians for a guide of theirs, hee that they honoured for King followed vs by the riuer. That afternoone we trifled in looking vpon the Rockes and riuer (further he would not goe) so there we erected a crosse, and that night taking our man at *Powhatans,* Captaine *Newport* congratulated[7] his kindenes with a Gown and a Hatchet: returning to *Arsetecke,* and stayed there the next day to obserue the height[8] therof, and so with many signes of loue we departed.

The next day the Queene of *Agamatack* kindely intreated[9] vs, her people being no lesse contented then the rest, and from thence we went to another place (the name whereof I doe not remember) where the people shewed vs the manner of their diuing for Mussels, in which they finde Pearles.

That night passing by *Weanock* some twentie miles from our Fort, they according to their former churlish condition, seemed little to affect[10] vs, but as wee departed and lodged at the point of *Weanocke,* the people the next morning seemed kindely to content[11] vs, yet we might perceiue many signes of a more Iealousie in them then before, and also the Hinde[12] that the King of *Arseteck* had giuen vs, altered his resolution in going to our Fort, and with many kinde circumstances[13] left vs there. This gaue vs some occasion to doubt[14] some mischiefe at the Fort, yet Captaine *Newport* intended to haue visited *Paspahegh* and *Tappahanocke,* but the instant change of the winde being faire for our return we repaired to the fort with all speed, where the first we heard was that 400. Indians the day before had assalted the fort, and supprised it, had not God (beyond al their expectations) by meanes of the shippes (at whom they shot[15] with their Ordinances and Muskets) caused them to retire, they had entred the fort with our own men, which were then busied in setting Corne, their armes beeing then in driefats[16] and few ready but certain Gentlemen of their own, in which conflict, most of the Counsel was hurt, a boy slaine in the Pinnas, and thirteene or fourteene more hurt.

With all speede we pallisadoed our Fort: (each other day) for sixe or seauen daies we had alarums by ambuscadoes, and four or fiue cruelly wounded by being abroad: the Indians losse wee know not, but as they report three were slain and diuers hurt.

Captaine *Newport* hauing set things in order, set saile for England the 22 of June, leauing prouision for 13. or 14 weeks.

The day before the Ships departure, the King of *Pamaunke*[17] sent the Indian that had met vs before in our discouerie, to assure vs peace; our fort being then palisadoed round, and all our men in good health and comfort, albeit, that thro[u]gh some discontented humors, it did not so long continue.

. . . .

---

[5] a mile

[6] Rises with the tide; freshes are freshets.

[7] gratefully acknowledged

[8] latitude

[9] entertained

[10] seemed somewhat disaffected toward

[11] appeared friendly toward

[12] The guide mentioned before.

[13] professions

[14] suspect

[15] *i. e.,* which shot at them

[16] vats, or cases, for containing dry articles

[17] King Opechancanough

[*conclusion*]

In all this time, our men being all or the most part well recouered, and we not willing to trifle away more time then necessitie enforced vs vnto: we thought good, for the better content of the aduenturers, in some reasonable sort to fraight home Maister *Nelson,* with Cedar wood. About which, our men going with willing minds, [it] was in very good time effected, and the ship sent for England [on 2nd June, 1608]. Wee now remaining being in good health, all our men wel contented, free from mutinies, in loue one with another, and as we hope in a continuall peace with the Indians: where we doubt not but by Gods gracious assistance, and the aduenturers[18] willing minds and speedie futherance to so honorable an action, in after times to see our Nation to enioy a Country, not onely exceeding pleasant for habitation, but also very profitable for comerce in generall; no doubt pleasing to almightie God, honourable to our gracious Soueraigne, and commodious[19] generally to the whole Kingdome.

1607 1608

From THE GENERAL HISTORY OF VIRGINIA[1]

From Book III, Chapter II. What Happened till the First Supply

. . . .

The new President, and *Martin,*[2] being little beloved, of weake iudgement in dangers, and lesse industrie in peace, committed the managing of all things abroad to Captaine *Smith:* who by his owne example, good words, and faire promises, set some to mow, others to binde thatch, some to build houses, others to thatch them, himselfe alwayes bearing the greatest taske for his owne share, so that in short time, he provided most of them lodgings, neglecting any for himselfe.

This done, seeing the Salvages superfluitie[3] beginne to decrease, [he] (with some of his workemen) shipped himselfe in the Shallop to search the Country for trade. The want of the language, knowledge to mannage his boat without sailes, the want of a sufficient power (knowing the multitude of the Salvages), apparell for his men, and other necessaries, were infinite impediments; yet no discouragement.

Being but six or seauen in company he went downe the river to *Kecoughtan:* where at first they scorned him, as a famished man; and would in derison offer him a handfull of Corne, a peece of bread, for their swords and muskets, and such like proportions also for their apparell. But seeing by trade and courtesie there was nothing to be had, he made bold to try such conclusions as necessitie inforced, though contrary to his Commission: Let fly his muskets, ran his boat on shore; whereat they all fled into the woods.

So marching towards their houses, they might see great heapes of corne: much adoe he had to restraine his hungry souldiers from present taking of it, expecting as it hapned that the Salvages would assault them, as not long after they did with a most hydeous noyse. Sixtie or seaventie of them, some blacke, some red, some white, some party-coloured, came in a square order, singing and dauncing out of the woods, with their *Okee* (which was an Idoll made of skinnes, stuffed with mosse, all painted and hung with chaines and copper) borne before them: and in this manner, being well armed with Clubs, Targets, Bowes, and Arrowes, they charged the English, that so kindly receiued them with their muskets loaden with Pistoll shot, that downe fell their God, and divers lay sprauling on the ground; the rest fled againe to the woods, and ere long sent one of their *Quiyoughkasoucks*[4] to offer peace, and redeeme their *Okee.*

Smith told them, if onely six of them would come vnarmed and loade his boat, he would not only be their friend, but restore them their *Okee,* and giue them Beads, Copper, and Hatchets besides: which on both sides was to their contents performed: and then they brought him Venison, Turkies, wild foule, bread, and what they had;

[18] Those who had invested their capital in the colony.

[19] profitable

[1] This history was prepared by Smith at the request of the London Virginia Company and printed at London, in 1624, just before the bankruptcy and dissolution of the company. Smith, already subjected to much hostile criticism and anticipating more, vehemently declared: "I thank God I never undertook anything yet [wherein] any could tax me of carelessness or dishonesty; and what is he to whom I am indebted or troublesome?" (Arber's edition of Smith, p. 274.) In regard to the much discussed incident of Pocahontas, Mr. Arber remarks that the story was never questioned in Smith's lifetime, and that to deny the truth of it "is to create more difficulties than are involved in its acceptance" (*ibid.*, p. cxv).

[2] John Ratcliffe, and Captain John Martin, a member of the Council.

[3] Supplies furnished by the Indians (mentioned earlier in the account).

[4] Defined by Smith as "petty gods, and their affinities."

singing and dauncing in signe of friendship till they departed.

In his returne, he discovered the Towne and Country of *Warraskoyack*. . . .

And now the winter approaching, the rivers became so covered with swans, geese, duckes, and cranes, that we daily feasted with good bread, Virginia pease, pumpions,[5] and putchamins,[6] fish, fowle, and diverse sorts of wild beasts as fat as we could eate them: so that none of our Tuftaffaty humorists[7] desired to goe for *England*.

But our *Comœdies* never endured long without a *Tragedie;* some idle exceptions being muttered against Captaine *Smith,* for not discovering the head of *Chickahamania* river, and taxed by the Councell, to be too slow in so worthy an attempt. The next voyage hee proceeded so farre that with much labour by cutting of trees insunder he made his passage; but when his Barge could passe no farther, he left her in a broad bay out of danger of shot, commanding none should goe a shore till his returne: himselfe with two English and two Salvages went vp higher in a Canowe; but hee was not long absent, but his men went a shore, whose want of government gaue both occasion and opportunity to the Salvages to surprise one *George Cassen,* whom they slew, and much failed not to haue cut of[f] the boat and all the rest.

Smith little dreaming of that accident, being got to the marshes at the rivers head, twentie myles in the desert, had his two men slaine (as is supposed) sleeping by the Canowe, whilst himselfe by fowling sought them victuall: who finding he was beset with 200. Salvages, two of them hee slew, still defending himselfe with the ayd of a Salvage his guid, whom he bound to his arme with his garters, and vsed him as a buckler, yet he was shot in his thigh a little, and had many arrowes that stucke in his cloathes but no great hurt, till at last they tooke him prisoner.

When this newes came to *Iames* towne, much was their sorrow for his losse, fewe expecting what ensued.

Sixe or seuen weekes those Barbarians kept him prisoner, many strange triumphes and coniurations[8] they made of him, yet hee so demeaned himselfe amongst them, as he not onely diverted them from surprising the Fort, but procured his owne libertie, and got himselfe and his company such estimation amongst them, that those Salvages admired him more then their owne *Quiyouckosucks.*

The manner how they vsed and deliuered him, is as followeth.

The Salvages hauing drawne[9] from *George Cassen* whether Captaine *Smith* was gone, prosecuting that oportunity they followed him with .300. bowmen, conducted by the King of *Pamavnkee,* who in diuisions searching the turnings of the riuer, found *Robinson* and *Emry* by the fire side: those they shot full of arrowes and slew. Then finding the Captaine, as is said, that vsed the Salvage that was his guide as his shield (three of them being slaine and diuers other so gauld) all the rest would not come neere him. Thinking thus to haue returned to his boat, regarding them, as he marched, more then his way, [he] slipped vp to the middle in an oasie creeke and his Salvage with him; yet durst they not come to him till being neere dead with cold, he threw away his armes. Then according to their composition[10] they drew him forth and led him to the fire, where his men were slaine. Diligently they chafed his benummed limbs.

He demanding for their Captaine, they shewed him *Opechankanough,* King of *Pamavnkee,* to whom he gaue a round Ivory double compass Dyall. Much they marvailed at the playing of the Fly and Needle, which they could see so plainely and yet not touch it, because of the glasse that covered them. But when he demonstrated by that Globe-like Iewell, the roundnesse of the earth, and skies, the spheare of the Sunne, Moone, and Starres, and how the Sunne did chase the night round about the world continually; the greatnesse of the Land and Sea, the diversitie of Nations, varietie of complexions, and how we were to them *Antipodes,* and many other such like matters, they all stood as amazed with admiration.[11]

Notwithstanding, within an houre after they tyed him to a tree, and as many as could stand about him prepared to shoot him: but the King holding vp the Compass in his hand, they all laid downe their Bowes and Arrowes, and in a triumphant manner led him to *Orapaks,* where he was after their manner kindly feasted, and well vsed. . . . Not long after, early in a morning a great fire was made in a long house, and a mat spread on the one side, as on the other; on the one they caused him to sit, and all the guard went out of the house, and presently came skipping in a great grim fellow, all painted over with coale, mingled with oyle; and many Snakes and Wesels skins stuffed with mosse, and all their tayles tyed together, so as they met on the crowne of his head in a tassell; and round about the tassell was as a Coronet of feathers, the skins hanging round about his head, backe, and shoulders, and in a manner covered his face; with a hellish voyce, and a rattle in his hand. With most strange gestures and passions he began his invocation, and environed the fire with a circle of meale; which done, three more such like devils came rushing in with the like antique tricks, painted halfe blacke, halfe red: but all their eyes were painted white, and some red stroakes like Mutchato's,[12] along their cheekes: round about him those fiends daunced a pretty while, and then came in three more as vgly as the rest; with red eyes, and white stroakes over their blacke faces, at last they all sat downe right against him; three of them on the one hand of the chiefe Priest, and three on the other. Then all with their rattles began a song, which ended, the chiefe Priest layd downe fiue wheat cornes: then strayning his armes and hands with such violence that he sweat, and his veynes swelled, he began a short Oration: at the conclusion they all gaue a short groane; and then layd down three graines more. After that, began their song againe, and then another Oration, ever laying downe so many cornes as before, till they had twice incirculed the fire; that done, they tooke a bunch of little stickes prepared for that purpose, continuing still their devotion, and at the end of every song and Oration, they layd downe a sticke betwixt the divisions of Corne. Till night, neither he nor they did either eate or drinke; and then they feasted merrily, with the best provisions they could make. Three dayes they vsed this Ceremony; the meaning whereof they told him, was to know if he intended them well or no. The circle of meale signified their Country, the circles of corne the bounds of the Sea, and the stickes his Country. They imagined the world to be flat and round, like a trencher; and they in the middest.

---

[5] pumpkins

[6] persimmons (which, when unripe, "will draw a man's mouth awry with much torment")

[7] fastidious fault-finders (tŭft-taffeta was a kind of silk fabric)

[8] religious ceremonies (described later, to avert the evil of his presence)

[9] learned

[10] agreement

[11] wonder

After this they brought him a bagge of gunpowder, which they carefully preserved till the next spring, to plant as they did their corne; because they would be acquainted with the nature of that seede.

Opitchapam the Kings brother invited him to his house, where, with as many platters of bread, foule, and wild beasts, as did environ him, he bid him wellcome; but not any of them would eate a bit with him, but put vp all the remainder in Baskets.

At his returne to *Opechancanoughs,* all the Kings women, and their children, flocked about him for their parts; as a due by Custome, to be merry with such fragments.

But his waking mind in hydeous dreames did
oft see wondrous shapes,
Of bodies strange, and huge in growth, and of
stupendious makes.

At last they brought him to *Meronocomoco,* where was *Powhatan,* their Emperor. Here more than two hundred of those grim Courtiers stood wondering at him, as he had beene a monster; till *Powhatan* and his trayne had put themselues in their greatest braveries. Before a fire vpon a seat like a bedsted, he sat covered with a great robe, made of *Rarowcun* skinnes, and all the tayles hanging by. On either hand did sit a young wench of 16 or 18 yeares, and along on each side the house, two rowes of men, and behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red: many of their heads bedecked with the white downe of Birds; but every one with something: and a great chayne of white beads about their necks.

At his entrance before the King, all the people gaue a great shout. The Queene of *Appamatuck* was appointed to bring him water to wash his hands, and another brought him a bunch of feathers, in stead of a Towell, to dry them: having feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held, but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before *Powhatan:* then as many as could layd hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beate out his braines, *Pocahontas* the Kings dearest daughter, when no intreaty could prevaile, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne vpon his to saue him from death: whereat the Emperour was contented he should liue to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper; for they thought him as well of all occupations as themselues. For the King himselfe will make his owne robes, shooes, bowes, arrowes, pots; plant, hunt, or doe any thing so well as the rest.

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[12] mustachios

They say he bore a pleasant shew,
But sure his heart was sad.
For who can pleasant be, and rest,
That liues in feare and dread:
And having life suspected, doth
It still suspected lead.

Two dayes after, *Powhatan* having disguised himselfe in the most fearefullest manner he could, caused Captain *Smith* to be brought forth to a great house in the woods, and there vpon a mat by the fire to be left alone. Not long after from behinde a mat that divided the house, was made the most dolefullest noyse he ever heard; then *Powhatan* more like a devill then a man, with some two hundred more as blacke as himselfe, came vnto him and told him now they were friends, and presently he should goe to *Iames* towne, to send him two great gunnes, and a gryndstone, for which he would giue him the Country of *Capahowosick,* and for ever esteeme him as his sonne *Nantaquoud.*

So to *Iames* towne with 12 guides *Powhatan* sent him. That night they quarterd in the woods, he still expecting (as he had done all this long time of his imprisonment) every houre to be put to one death or other: for all their feasting. But almightie God (by his divine providence) had mollified the hearts of those sterne *Barbarians* with compassion. The next morning betimes they came to the Fort, where *Smith* having vsed the Salvages with what kindnesse he could, he shewed *Rawhunt, Powhatans* trusty servant, two demi-Culverings[13] and a millstone to carry *Powhatan:* they found them somewhat too heavie; but when they did see him discharge them, being loaded with stones, among the boughs of a great tree loaded with Isickles, the yce and branches came so tumbling downe, that the poore Salvages ran away halfe dead with feare. But at last we regained some conference with them, and gaue them such toyes; and sent to *Powhatan,* his women, and children such presents, as gaue them in generall full content.

Now in *Iames* Towne they were all in combustion, the strongest preparing once more to run away with the Pinnace; which with the hazzard of his life, with Sakre falcon[14] and musket shot, *Smith* forced now the third time to stay or sinke.

Some no better then they should be, had plotted with the President, the next day to haue put him to death by the Leviticall law,[15] for the liues of *Robinson* and *Emry;* pretending the fault was his that had led them to their ends: but he quickly tooke such order with such Lawyers, that he layd them by the heeles till he sent some of them prisoners for *England.*

Now ever once in foure or fiue dayes, *Pocahontas* with her attendants, brought him so much provision, that saved many of their liues, that els for all this had starved with hunger.

Thus from numbe death our good God sent
reliefe,
The sweete asswager of all other griefe.

. . . .

1623 1624

WILLIAM STRACHEY

Dates and places of birth and death unknown, but he was in the prime of life, 1609-1618. He sailed for Virginia in 1609 with Sir Thomas Gates, lieutenant-governor of the Colonization Colony, and Sir George Somers as admiral. The company was wrecked on the Bermudas in July, spent the winter in building boats, and reached Jamestown in the following April. Strachey was secretary and recorder of the Virginia colony, and joint author and editor of several publications concerning the colony. The *True Reportory* is in the form of a letter addressed to a lady of rank, dated 15 July 1610, and was published in *Purchas His Pilgrimes* in 1625 (vol. iv, p. 1734; 1905 ed., vol. xix, p. 5). Several accounts of this wreck and sojourn were sent back to England. There can be no doubt that some of these were used by Shakspere as the groundwork of *The Tempest,* in which he speaks of the "still-vex'd Bermoothes" (I. ii. 229).

From A TRUE REPORTORY

OF THE WRACKE, AND REDEMPTION OF SIR THOMAS GATES KNIGHT; UPON AND FROM THE ILANDS OF THE BERMUDAS: . . .

§. I

. . . .

During all this time, the heavens look'd so blacke upon us, that it was not possible the elevation of the Pole[1] might be observed nor a Starre by night, not Sunne beame by day was to be seene. Onely upon the thursday night Sir George Summers being upon the watch, had an apparition of a little round light, like a faint Starre, trembling, and streaming along with a sparkeling blaze, halfe the height upon the Maine Mast, and shooting sometimes from Shroud to Shroud, tempting to settle as it were upon any of the foure Shrouds: and for three or foure houres together, or rather more, halfe the night it kept with us; running sometimes along the Maine-yard to the very end, and then returning. At which, Sir George Summers called divers about him, and shewed them the same, who observed it with much wonder, and carefulnesse:[2] but upon a sodaine, towards the morning watch, they lost the sight of it, and knew not what way it made. . . .

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[13] A short, nine-pound cannon.

[14] A very light cannon.

[15] *Leviticus* xxiv. 17.

[1] pole-star

And surely Madam, it is most true, there was not any houre (a matter of admiration[3]) all these dayes, in which we freed not twelve hundred Barricos[4] of water, the least whereof contained six gallons, and some eight, besides three deepe Pumpes continually going, two beneath at the Capstone, and the other above in the halfe Decke, and at each Pumpe foure thousand stroakes at the least in a watch; so as I may well say, every foure houres, we quitted one hundred tunnes of water: and from tuesday noone till friday noone, we bailed and pumped two thousand tunne, and yet doe what we could, when our Ship held least in her, (after tuesday night second watch) shee bore ten foote deepe, at which stay our extreame working kept her one eight glasses,[5] forbearance whereof had instantly sunke us, and it being now Friday, the fourth morning, it wanted little, but that there had bin a generall determination, to have shut up hatches, and commending our sinfull soules to God, committed the Shippe to the mercy of the Sea: surely, that night we must have done it, and that night had we then perished: but see the goodnesse and sweet introduction of better hope, by our mercifull God given unto us. Sir George Summers, when no man dreamed of such happinesse, had discovered, and cried Land. Indeede the morning now three quarters spent, had wonne a little cleerenesse from the dayes before, and it being better surveyed, the very trees were seene to move with the winde upon the shoare side: whereupon our Governour commanded the Helmeman to beare up, the Boateswaine sounding at the first, found it thirteene fathome, and when we stood a little in seven fatham; and presently heaving his lead the third time, had ground at foure fathome, and by this, we had got her within a mile under the South-east point of the land, where we had somewhat smooth water. But having no hope to save her by comming to an anker in the same, we were inforced to runne her ashoare, as neere the land as we could, which brought us within three quarters of a mile of shoare, and by the mercy of God unto us, making out our Boates, we had ere night brought all our men, women, and children, about the number of one hundred and fifty, safe into the Iland.

We found it to be the dangerous and dreaded Iland, or rather Ilands of the Bermuda: whereof let mee give your Ladyship a briefe description, before I proceed to my narration. And that the rather, because they be so terrible to all that ever touched on them, and such tempests, thunders, and other fearefull objects are seene and heard about them, that they be called commonly, The Devils Ilands, and are feared and avoyded of all sea travellers alive, above any other place in the world. Yet it pleased our mercifull God, to make even this hideous and hated place, both the place of our safetie, and meanes of our deliverance.

. . . .

Sure it is, that there are no Rivers nor running Springs of fresh water to bee found upon any of them: when wee came first wee digged and found certaine gushings and soft bublings, which being either in bottoms, or on the side of hanging ground, were onely fed with raine water, which neverthelesse soone sinketh into the earth and vanisheth away, or emptieth it selfe out of sight into the Sea, without any channell above or upon the superficies of the earth: for according as their raines fell, we had our Wels and Pits (which we digged) either halfe full, or absolute exhausted and dry, howbeit some low bottoms (which the continuall descent from the Hills filled full, and in those flats could have no passage away) we found to continue as fishing Ponds, or standing Pooles, continually Summer and Winter full of fresh water. . . .

Fowle there is great store, small Birds, Sparrowes fat and plumpe like a Bunting, bigger then ours, Robbins of divers colours greene and yellow, ordinary and familiar in our Cabbins, and other of lesse sort. White and gray Hernshawes, Bitters, Teale, Snites, Crowes, and Hawkes, of which in March wee found divers Ayres,[6] Goshawkes and Tassells, Oxen-birds, Cormorants, Bald-Cootes, Moore-Hennes, Owls, and Battes in great store. And upon Newyeeres day in the morning, our Governour being walked foorth with another Gentleman Master James Swift, each of them with their Peeces killed a wild Swanne, in a great Sea-water Bay or Pond in our Iland. A kinde of webbe-footed Fowle there is, of the bignesse of an English greene Plover, or Sea-Meawe, which all the Summer wee saw not, and in the darkest nights of November and December (for in the night they onely feed) they would come forth, but not flye farre from home, and hovering in the ayre, and over the Sea, made a strange hollow and harsh howling. Their colour is inclining to Russet, with white bellies, (as are likewise the long Feathers of their wings Russet and White) these gather themselves together and breed in those Ilands which are high, and so farre alone into the Sea, that the Wilde Hogges cannot swimme over [to] them, and there in the ground they have their Burrowes, like Conyes in a Warren, and so brought in the loose Mould, though not so deepe: which Birds with a light bough in a darke night (as in our Lowbelling[7]) wee caught. I have beene at the taking of three hundred in an houre, and wee might have laden our Boates. Our men found a prettie way to take them, which was by standing on the Rockes or Sands by the Sea side, and hollowing, laughing, and making the strangest out-cry that possibly they could: with the noyse whereof the Birds would come flocking to that place, and settle upon the very armes and head of him that so cryed, and still creepe neerer and neerer, answering the noyse themselves: by which our men would weigh them with their hand, and which weighed heaviest they tooke for the best and let the others alone, and so our men would take twentie dozen in two houres of the chiefest of them; and they were a good and well relished Fowle, fat and full as a Partridge. In January wee had great store of their Egges, which are as great as an Hennes Egge, and so fashioned and white shelled, and have no difference in yolke nor white from an Hennes Egge. There are thousands of these Birds, and two or three Ilands full of their Burrowes, whether at any time (in two houres warning) wee could send our Cock-boat, and bring home as many as would serve the whole Company: which Birds for their blindnesse (for they see weakly in the day) and for their cry and whooting, wee called the Sea Owle:[8] they will bite cruelly with their crooked Bills. . . .

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[2] concern [3] wonder [4] casks

[5] Eight half-hour glasses (four hours). Cf. *The Tempest,* v. i. 223.

[6] aeries, nests

§. II

So soone as wee were a little setled after our landing, with all the conveniencie wee might, and as the place, and our many wants would give us leave, wee made up our long Boate (as your Ladyship hath heard) in fashion of a Pinnace, fitting her with a little Deck, made of the Hatches of our ruin'd ship, so close that no water could goe in her, gave her Sayles and Oares, and intreating with our Masters Mate Henry Ravens (who was supposed a sufficient Pilot) wee found him easily wonne to make over therewith, as a Barke of Aviso[9] for Virginia, which being in the height of thirtie seven degrees, five degrees from the Iland which we were, might bee some one hundred and fortie leagues from us, or thereabouts (reckoning to every degree that lies North-east, and Westerly twentie eight English leagues) who the twentie eight of August being Munday, with sixe Saylers, and our Cape Merchant Thomas Whittingham departed from us out of Gates his Bay:[10] but to our much wonder returned againe upon the Wednesday night after, having attempted to have got cleere of the Iland, from the North North-east to the South-west, but could not as little water as shee drew, (which might not bee above twentie inches) for shoales and breaches,[11] so as he was faine to go out from Summers Creeks, and the same way we came in on the South South-east of the Ilands, and from thence wee [he] made to Sea the Friday after the first of September, promising if hee lived and arrived safe there, to returne unto us the next new Moone with the Pinnace belonging to the Colony there: according unto which instructions were directed unto the new Leiftenant Governour, and Councell from our Governour here, for which the Ilands were appointed carefully to be watched, and fiers prepared as Beacons to have directed and wafted him in, but two Moones were wasted upon the Promontory before mentioned, and [wee] gave many a long and wished looke round about the Horizon, from the North-east to the South-west, but in vaine, discovering nothing all the while, which way soever we turned our eye, but ayre and sea.

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[7] A method of capturing birds by stupefying them with lights and the noise of a bell.

[8] In *The Tempest*, II. ii. 176, Caliban says: "Sometimes I'll get thee Young scamels from the rock." If *scamels* be a misprint for *sea-mells* or *sea-mews*, it probably refers to the birds described here; if for *staniels*, it refers to the hawks mentioned earlier.

[9] advice-boat, packet-boat

[10] Gates's Bay

[11] breakers

. . . .

1610 1625

WILLIAM BRADFORD

Born in Yorkshire, 1590, died in Massachusetts, 1657. After imprisonment for one unsuccessful attempt, Bradford escaped from England to the Pilgrim colony at Leyden where he became a dyer and merchant. He was one of the Mayflower immigrants in 1620, was elected governor of the Plymouth colony the following year and served in that office, with the exception of five years, until his death.

From Bradford's history, OF PLIMOTH PLANTATION. BOOK I.[1]

The 9. Chap.

Of their vioage, and how they passed the sea, and of their safe arrivall at Cape Codd.

September: 6. These troubls[2] being blowne over, and now all being compacte togeather in one shipe, they put to sea againe with a prosperus winde, which continued diverce days togeather, which was some incouragmente unto them; yet, . . . after they had injoyed faire winds and weather for a season, they were incountred many times with crosse winds, and mette with many feirce stormes, with which the shipe was shroudly shaken, and her upper works made very leakie; and one of the maine beames in the midd ships was bowed and craked, which put them in some fear that the shipe could not be able to performe the vioage. . . . But in examening of all opinions, the master and others affirmed they knew the ship to be stronge and firme under water; and for the buckling[3] of the maine beame, ther was a great iron scrue the passengers brought out of Holland, which would raise the beame into his place; the which being done, the carpenter and master affirmed that with a post put under it, set firme in the lower deck, and otherways bounde, he would make it sufficiente. And as for the decks and uper workes they would calke them as well as they could, and though with the workeing of the ship they would not longe keepe stanch, yet ther would otherwise be no great danger, if they did not overpress her with sails. So they commited them selves to the will of God, and resolved to proseede. . . .

. . . In all this viage ther died but one of the passengers, which was William Butten, a youth, servant to Samuell Fuller, when they drew near the coast. But to omite other things, (that I may be breefe,) after longe beating at sea they fell with that land which is called Cape Cod; the which being made and certainly knowne to be it, they were not a litle joyfull. After some deliberation had amongst them selves and with the master of the ship, they tacked aboute and resolved to stande for the southward (the wind and weather being faire) to finde some place aboute Hudsons river for their habitation. But after they had sailed that course aboute halfe the day, they fell amongst deangerous shoulds and roring breakers, and they were so farr intangled ther with as[4] they conceived them selves in great danger; and the wind shrinking upon them withall, they resolved to bear up againe for the Cape, and thought them selves hapy to gett out of those dangers before night overtooke them, as by Gods providence they did. And the next day they gott into the Cape-harbor wher they ridd in saftie. A word or too by the way of this cape; it was thus first named by Capten Gosnole and his company, Anno: 1602,[5] and after by Capten Smith was caled Cape James; but it retains the former name amongst seamen. Also that pointe which first shewed those dangerous shoulds unto them, they called Pointe Care, and Tuckers Terrour; but the French and Dutch to this day call it Malabarr, by reason of those perilous shoulds, and the losses they have suffered their.

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[1] Bradford's manuscript history, *Of Plimoth Plantation*, lost during the Revolution, found in England, and returned (1897) to this country, is the most important of several accounts written of the Plymouth colony. It covers the period from 1606 to 1648, was begun about 1630, and was first published by the Mass. Hist. Society in 1856. Though lacking the picturesqueness of Smith's narrative, its historical accuracy is greater. The Plymouth Colony was mainly made up from a band of Puritans who fled from religious persecution in England and settled at Leyden, Holland. In 1620, the more venturesome spirits determined to come to the New World. In fitting out the *Mayflower*, in which they sailed, they obtained help from the merchants of colonization companies in London and Plymouth, and a joint stock company was formed, the merchants imposing rather exacting terms. At the end of seven years, the capital and profits were to be divided between the adventurers (investors) and the planters (colonists).

[2] They had put back once because of the unseaworthiness of their ships.

[3] as for the bending

[4] that

[5] Because they tooke much of that fishe ther,—Bradford's note.

Being thus arived in a good harbor and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the periles and miseries therof, againe to set their feete on the firme and stable earth, their proper elemente. And no marvell if they were thus joyefull, seeing wise Seneca was so affected with sailing a few miles on the coast of his owne Italy; as he affirmed, that he had rather remaine twentie years on his way by land, then pass by sea to any place in a short time; so tedious and dreadfull was the same unto him.[6]

But hear I cannot but stay and make a pause, and stand half amased at this poore peoples presente condition; and so I thinke will the reader too, when he well considers the same. Being thus passed the vast ocean, and a sea of troubles before in their preparation (as may be remembred by that which wente before), they had now no freinds to wellcome them, nor inns to entertaine or refresh their weatherbeaten bodys, no houses or much less townes to repaire too, to seeke for succoure. It is recorded in scripture as a mercie to the apostle and his shipwraked company, that the barbarians shewed them no smale kindnes in refreshing them,[7] but these savage barbarians, when they mette with them (as after will appeare) were readier to fill their sids full of arrows then otherwise. And for the season it was winter, and they that know the winters of that cuntrie know them to be sharp and violent, and subjecte to cruell and feirce stormes, deangerous to travill to known places, much more to serch an unknown coast. Besids, what could they see but a hidious and desolate wildernes, full of wild beasts and willd men? and what multituds ther might be of them they knew not. Nether could they, as it were, goe up to the tope of Pisgah,[8] to vew from this willdernes a more goodly cuntrie to feed their hops; for which way soever they turnd their eys (save upward to the heavens) they could have litle solace or content in respecte of any outward objects. For summer being done, all things stand upon them with a wetherbeaten face; and the whole countrie, full of woods and thickets, represented[9] a wild and savage heiw. If they looked behind them, ther was the mighty ocean which they had passed, and was now as a maine barr and goulfe to seperate them from all the civill parts of the world. If it be said they had a ship to sucour them, it is trew; but what heard they daly from the master and company? but that with speede they should looke out a place with their shallop, wher they would be[10] at some near distance; for the season was shuch as he would not stirr from thence till a safe harbor was discovered by them wher they would be, and he might goe without danger; and that victells consumed apace, but he must and would keepe sufficient for them selves[11] and their returne. Yea, it was muttered by some, that if they gott not a place in time, they would turne them and their goods ashore and leave them. Let it also be considred what weake hopes of supply and succoure they left behinde them, that might bear up their minds in this sade condition and trialls they were under; and they could not but be very smale. It is true, indeed, the affections and love of their brethren at Leyden was cordiall and entire towards them, but they had litle power to help them, or them selves; and how the case stode betweene them and the marchants at their coming away, hath allready been declared. What could now sustaine them but the spirite of God and his grace? May not and ought not the children of these fathers rightly say: *Our faithers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this willdernes; but they cried unto the Lord, and he heard their voyce, and looked on their adversitie, etc. Let them therfore praise the Lord, because he is good, and his mercies endure for ever. Yea, let them which have been redeemed of the Lord shew how he hath delivered them from the hand of the oppressour. When they wandered in the deserte willdernes out of the way, and found no citie to dwell in, both hungrie, and thirstie, their sowle was overwhelmed in them. Let them confess before the Lord his loving kindnes, and his wonderfull works before the sons of men.*

The 10. Chap.

Showing how they sought out a place of habitation, and what befell them theraboute.

Being thus arrived at Cap-Codd the 11. of November, and necessitie calling them to looke out a place for habitation, (as well as the maisters and mariners importunitie,) they having brought a large shalop with them out of England, stowed in quarters in the ship, they now gott her out and sett their carpenters to worke to trime her up; but being much brused and shatered in the shipe with foule weather, they saw she would be longe in mending. Wherupon a few of them tendered them selves to goe by land and discovere those nearest places, whilst the shallop was in mending; and the rather because as they wente into that harbor ther seemed to be an opening some 2. or 3 leagues of, which the maister judged to be a river. It was conceived ther might be some danger in the attempte, yet seeing them resolute, they were permited to goe, being 16. of them well armed, under the conduct of Captain Standish,[12] having shuch instructions given them as was thought meete. They sett forth the 15. of November: and when they had marched aboute the space of a mile by the sea side, they espied 5. or 6. persons, with a dogg coming towards them, who were salvages; but they fled from them, and ranne up into the woods, and the English followed them, partly to see if they could speake with them, and partly to discover if ther might not be more of them lying in ambush. But the Indeans seeing them selves thus followed, they againe forsooke the woods, and rane away on the sands as hard as they could, so as they could not come near them, but followed them by the tracte of their feet sundrie miles, and saw that they had come the same way. So, night coming on, they made their randevous and set out their sentinels, and rested in quiete *that night,* and the next morning followed their tracte till they had headed a great creake, and so left the sands, and turned an other way into the woods. But they still followed them by geuss, hopeing to find their dwellings; but they soone lost both them and them selves, falling into shuch thickets as were ready to tear their cloaths and armore in peeces, but were most distresed for wante of drinke. But at length they found water and refreshed them selves, being the first New-England water they drunke of, and was now in thir great thirste as pleasante unto them as wine or bear had been in for-times. Afterwards they directed their course to come to the other shore, for they knew it was a necke of land they were to crosse over, and so at length gott to the sea-side, and marched to this supposed river, and by the way found a pond of clear fresh water, and shortly after a good quantitie of clear ground wher the Indeans had formerly set corne, and some of their graves. And proceeding furder, they saw new-stuble wher corne had been set the same year, also they found wher latly a house had been, wher some planks and a great ketle was remaining, and heaps of sand newly padled with their hands, which they, digging up, found in them diverce faire Indean baskets filled with corne, and some in eares, faire and good, of diverce collours, which seemed to them a very goodly sight, (haveing never seen any shuch before). This was near the place of that supposed river they came to seeck; unto which they wente and found it to open it selfe into 2. armes with a high cliffe of sand in the enterance, but more like to be crikes of salte water then any fresh, for ought they saw; and that ther was good harborige for their shalope; leaving it further to be discovered by their shalop when she was ready. So their time [that was] limeted them being expired, they returned to the ship, least they should be in fear of their saftie; and tooke with them parte of the corne and buried up the rest, and so like the men from Eshcoll[13] carried with them of the fruits of the land, and showed their breethren; of which, and their returne, they were marvelusly glad, and their harts incouraged.

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[6] Seneca, *Epistles*, 53.

[7] *Acts* xxviii. 2.

[8] *Deuteronomy* xxxiv. 1.

[9] presented

[10] where they wanted to settle

[11] the seamen (In the succeeding sentence also, the pronouns referring to the seamen and those referring to the passengers are used indiscriminately.)

. . . .

1630-1650 1856

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[12] In view of the romance which Longfellow, in *The Courtship of Miles Standish,* afterwards wove about some of the persons mentioned in this history the following entries in Bradford's list of the passengers of the *Mayflower* are of interest:

"Captain Miles Standish, and Rose, his wife."

"Mr. William Mullins, and his wife, and two children, Joseph and Priscilla; and a servant, Robert Carter."

"John Alden was hired for a cooper, at Southampton, where the ship victualed; and being a hopeful [promising] young man, was much desired, but left to his own liking to go or stay when he came here; but he stayed, and married here."

Also the following entries, made in 1650:

"Captain Standish his wife died in the first sickness [an epidemic, probably of typhus fever, the first winter], and he married again, and hath four sons living, and some are dead.

"Mr. Mullins, and his wife, his son, and his servant, died the first winter. Only his daughter Priscilla survived, and married with John Alden, who are both living and have eleven children. And their eldest daughter is married and hath five children."

[13] *Numbers* xiii. 24.

RICHARD MATHER

Born, Lancashire, England, 1596, died, Dorchester, Massachusetts, 1669. He studied at Oxford, took orders, was twice suspended for nonconformity, fled in disguise to Bristol, whence he emigrated to America in 1635, and became pastor of the church at Dorchester, where he officiated until his death. His writings were mainly religious and controversial. He coöperated in the compilation of the *Bay Psalm Book*. Four of his six sons were famous preachers, in England, Ireland, and America. He was grandfather of Cotton Mather.

From RICHARD MATHER'S JOURNAL[*][1]

. . . .

Monday morning, [June 22, 1635] the wind serving, with a strong gale at east, we set sail from Milford Haven, where we had waited for wind twelve days, and were carried forth with speedy course, and about noon lost all sight of land. The wind being strong, the sea was rough this day, and most of our passengers were very sick and ill through much casting.

Tuesday, the wind still easterly, and a very rainy day. We were carried forward apace, and launched forth a great way into the deep. But our people were still very sick. This day, at evening, we lost sight of the three ships bound for Newfoundland, which had been in company with us from King Road; and our master thought it best for us to stay for the *Angel Gabriel*, being bound for New England, as we were, rather than to leave her and go with the other three. The *Angel Gabriel* is a strong ship, and well furnished with fourteen or sixteen pieces of ordnance, and therefore our seamen rather desired her company; but yet she is slow in sailing, and therefore we went sometimes with three sails less than we might have done, that so we might not overgo her.

Wednesday, the wind still at east, but not so strong as the other two days before. This morning we saw abundance of porpoises leaping and playing about our ship; and spent a great deal of time, till two or three o'clock in the afternoon, in pursuing (with the *Angel Gabriel*), another ship, which we supposed to have been a Turkish pirate, and to have taken the *Mary*.[2] The ground of which supposal was, because yesternight the *Mary* was in our sight, behind her fellows, and a little ship, like to the *Mary*, had been with the other ship this morning when we first espied them. But the little ship parted from the other, and we doubted she had been the *Mary*, taken and sent away as a prize by the Turk; and this made us more willing to pursue them. But not being able to overtake them, we left pursuing, and turned our course again our own way.

Thursday, the wind still easterly; in the morning wet and rainy; but about noon a fair, sunshiny day. Many of our passengers, that had been sick before, began to be far better, and came with delight to walk above, upon the deck.

Friday, wind at north, and afterward more westward. This day we saw many porpoises leaping and running like about our ship.

Saturday, wind still northwest; but a fair, cool day.

The first Sabbath from Milford Haven, and the sixth on shipboard; a fair, cool day; wind northerly, good for our purpose. I was exercised[3] in the forenoon, and Mr. Maude in the afternoon. This evening we saw porpoises about the ship, and some would fain have been striking; but others dissuaded because of the Sabbath; and so it was let alone.

Monday morning, wind still northerly; a fair, cool day. This morning, about seven of the clock, our seamen struck a great porpoise, and hauled it with ropes into the ship; for bigness, not much less than a hog of twenty or twenty-five shillings apiece, and not much unlike for shape, with flesh fat and lean, like in color to the fat and lean of a hog; and being opened upon the deck, had within his entrails, as liver, lights, heart, guts, etc., for all the world like a swine. The seeing of him hauled into the ship, like a swine from the sty to the trestle, and opened upon the deck in view of all our company, was wonderful to us all, and marvelous merry sport, and delightful to our women and children. So good was our God unto us, in affording us the day before spiritual refreshing to our souls, and this day morning also delightful recreation to our bodies, at the taking and opening of this huge and strange fish. In the afternoon the *Angel Gabriel* sent their boat to our ship, to see how we did; and our master,

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[*] From this point, with exceptions to be noted, spelling and punctuation are modernized.

[1] The *Journal* gives one of the most picturesque accounts extant of the Puritan migration to America.

[2] Pirates from the Barbary states of northern Africa were the terror of the eastern Atlantic quite to the English channel. The *Mary* was a ship of seventy tons bound for Massachusetts.

[3] Conducted religious exercises; Mr. Maude was another dissenting clergyman.

Captain Taylor, went aboard the *Angel*, and took Mathew Michel and me along with him. When we came thither, we found their passengers that had been seasick now well recovered, the most of them, and two children that had had the smallpox well recovered again. We were entreated to stay sup there with their master, etc., and had good cheer, mutton boiled and roasted, roasted turkey, good sack, etc. After which loving and courteous entertainment, we took leave, and came aboard the *James* again at night.

. . . .

Friday, wind still northerly, but very faint. It was a great foggy mist, and exceeding cold, as it had been December. One would have wondered to have seen the innumerable numbers of fowl, which we saw swimming on every side of the ship, and mighty fishes rolling and tumbling in the waters, twice as long and big as an ox. In the afternoon we saw mighty whales spewing up water in the air, like the smoke of a chimney, and making the sea about them white and hoary, as it is said in Job; of such incredible bigness that I will never wonder that the body of Jonas[4] could be in the belly of a whale. At evening our seamen sounded, and found ground at fifty fathom.

Saturday morning, they sounded again, and found no bottom, conceiving thereby that we were the day before on Newfoundland Bank, on the end of it nearer to New England. This day, about nine of the clock, the wind turned from being northerly, and came about by the east unto the south, and the great fog vanished away, and it became a clear, sunshiny day. This day Mathew Michel and I, taking notice that the hay and water waxed scarce, went to our master, entreating him to tell us how far he conceived us to want of our journey's end, that so we might better know how to order our water and provisions for our cattle, which yet were all alive and in good liking[5]; and he thereupon summed up all the passages of our journey past, and conceived two hundred and fifty leagues to be yet remaining unfinished.

On Friday, in the evening, we had an hour or two of marvelous delightful recreation, which also was a feast unto us for many days after, while we fed upon the flesh of three huge porpoises, like to as many fat hogs, striked by our seamen, and hauled with ropes into the ship. The flesh of them was good meat, with salt, pepper, and vinegar; the fat like fat bacon; the lean like bull-beef; and on Saturday evening they took another also.

The fifth Sabbath from Milford Haven, and the tenth on shipboard; a fair, sunshiny summer day, and would have been very hot, had not God allayed the heat with a good gale of southerly wind; by which also we were carried on in our journey after[6] seven leagues a watch. I was exercised in the forenoon, and Mr. Maude in the afternoon. In the afternoon the wind grew stronger, and it was a rough night for wind and rain, and some had our beds that night ill wet with rain leaking in through the sides of the ship.

Monday, wind still strong at south. This day we spent much time in filling divers tuns of emptied casks with salt water; which was needful, because much beer, fresh water, beef, and other provisions being spent, the ship went not so well, being too light for want of ballast. When this work was done, we set forth more sail, and went that evening and all the night following with good speed in our journey.

Tuesday morning, a great calm, and very hot all that forenoon; our people and cattle being much afflicted with faintness, sweating, and heat. But (lo! the goodness of our God), about noon the wind blew at north and by east, which called us from our heat, and holp us forward in our way. This afternoon there came and light[7] upon our ship a little land-bird, with blue-colored feathers, about the bigness of a sparrow; by which some conceived we were not far from land.

Wednesday, not extremely hot, but a good gale of cooling wind. But yet, being at the west and by north, it was against us in our way; so that we were forced to tack northward and southward, and gained little.

Thursday, wind still westerly, against us, all the forenoon. But about one of the clock the Lord remembered us in mercy, and sent us a fresh gale at south; which, though weak and soft, yet did not only much mitigate the heat, but also holp us something forward in our way. In the evening, about sun-setting, we saw with admiration and delight, innumerable multitudes of huge grampuses, rolling and tumbling about the sides of the ship, spewing and puffing up water as they went, and pursuing great numbers of bonitoes and lesser fishes;—so marvelous to behold are the works and wonders of the Almighty in the deep.

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[4] Jonah

[5] appearance, favor

[6] at the rate of

[7] alighted, lit

. . . .

Saturday morning, we had a good gale of wind at west-southwest; and this morning our seamen took abundance of mackerel; and about eight of the clock we all had a clear and comfortable sight of America, and made land again at an island called Menhiggin,[8] an island without inhabitants, about thirty-nine leagues northward or northeast short of Cape Ann. A little from the island we saw, more northward, divers other islands, called St. George Islands, and the main land of New England all along, northward and eastward, as we sailed. This mercy of our God we had cause more highly to esteem of, because when we first saw land this morning, there was a great fog, and afterward, when the day cleared up, we saw many rocks and islands almost on every side us, as Menhiggin, St. George Islands, Pemmaquid, etc. Yet, in the midst of these dangers our God preserved us; though, because of the thick fog, we could not see far about us to look unto ourselves. In the afternoon, the wind continuing still westward, against us, we lay off again to the sea southward, and our seamen and many passengers delighted themselves in taking abundance of mackerel.

The seventh Sabbath from Milford, and the twelfth on shipboard. This day was a fair, clear, and comfortable day, though the wind was directly against us, so that we were forced to tack to and again, southward and northward, gaining little, but were all day still in sight of land. Mr. Maude in the forenoon, I in the afternoon.

Monday morning, the wind still continuing against us, we came to anchor at Richmond's Island, in the east part of New England; the Bay of Massachusetts, whither we were bound, lying thirty leagues distant from us to the west. Our seamen were willing here to cast anchor, partly because the wind was against us, and partly because of necessity they must come to anchor to take in a pilot somewhere before we came to the Bay, by reason that our pilot knew the harbors no further but to the Isles of Shoals. When we came within sight of the island, the planters (or rather fishers, for their chief employment was fishing), there being but two families, and about forty persons, were sore afraid of us, doubting lest we had been French,[9] come to pillage the island, as Penobscots had been served by them about ten days before. When we were come to anchor, and their fear was passed, they came some of them aboard to us in their shallops, and we went some of us ashore into the island, to look for fresh water and grass for our cattle; and the planters bade us welcome, and gave some of us courteous entertainment in their houses.

. . . .

Friday morning, the wind was strong at south-southwest, and so continued till towards evening, and then was somewhat milder. This day we tacked to and again all day, one while west and by north towards Isles of Shoals, another while east-southeast to sea again; Cape Ann, whither our way was, lying from us south-southwest, directly in the eye of the wind, so that we could not come near unto it. But this evening, by moonlight, about ten of the clock, we came to anchor at the Isles of Shoals, which are seven or eight islands and other great rocks, and there slept sweetly that night till break of day.

But yet the Lord had not done with us, nor yet had let us see all his power and goodness, which he would have us to take knowledge of; and therefore, on Saturday morning, about break of day, the Lord sent forth a most terrible storm of rain and easterly wind, whereby we were in as much danger as, I think, ever people were. For we lost in that morning three great anchors and cables; of which cables one, having cost £50, never had been in any water before; two were broken by the violence of the waves, and the third cut by the seamen in extremity and distress, to save the ship and their and our lives. And when our cables and anchors were all lost, we had no outward means of deliverance but by loosing sail, if so be we might get to the sea from amongst the islands and rocks where we anchored. But the Lord let us see that our sails could not save us neither, no more than our cables and anchors. For, by the force of the wind and rain, the sails were rent in sunder and split in pieces, as if they had been but rotten rags, so that of the foresail and spritsail there was scarce left so much as an hand-breadth that was not rent in pieces and blown away into the sea. So that at this time all hope that we should be saved, in regard to any outward appearance, was utterly taken away; and the rather, because we seemed to drive with full force of wind and rain directly upon a mighty rock, standing out in sight above the water; so that we did but continually wait when we should hear and feel the doleful rushing and crushing of the ship upon the rock. In this extremity and appearance of death, as distress and distraction would suffer us, we cried unto the Lord, and he was pleased to have compassion and pity upon us; for by his overruling providence and his own immediate good hand, he guided the ship past the rock, assuaged the violence of the sea and the wind and rain, and gave us a little respite to fit the ship with other sails, and sent us a fresh gale of wind at [ ] by which we went on that day in our course southwest and by west towards Cape Ann. It was a day much to be remembered, because on that day the Lord granted us as wonderful a deliverance as, I think, ever people had, out of as apparent danger as I think ever people felt. I am sure our seamen confessed they never knew the like. The Lord so imprint the memory of it on our hearts, that we may be the better for it, and be more careful to please him and to walk uprightly before him as long as we live; and I hope we shall not forget the passages of that morning until our dying day.

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[8] Monhegan, an island on the coast of Maine. Most of the places following may be found on any good map.

[9] French and English claims in the vicinity conflicted for a good many years.

In the storm, one Mr. Willett, of New Plymouth, and other three men with him, having been turned out of all their havings at Penobscot about a fortnight before, and coming along with us in our ship from Richmond's Island, with his boat and goods in it made fast at the stern of our ship, lost his boat with all that was therein, the violence of the waves breaking the boat in pieces, and sinking the bottom of it into the bottom of the sea. And Richard Becon, lending his help to the seamen at the haling[10] of a cable, had the cable catched about his arm, whereby his arm was crushed in pieces, and his right hand pulled away, and himself brought into doleful and grievous pain and misery.

But in all this grievous storm, my fear was the less, when I considered the clearness of my calling from God this way; and in some measure (the Lord's holy name be blessed for it), he gave us hearts contented and willing that he should do with us and ours what he pleased, and what might be most for the glory of his name; and in that we rested ourselves. But when news was brought unto us into the gunroom,[11] that the danger was past, oh how our hearts did then relent and melt within us! and how we burst out into tears of joy amongst ourselves, in love unto our gracious God, and admiration of his kindness, in granting to his poor servants such an extraordinary and miraculous deliverance! His holy name be blessed forever!

This day we went on towards Cape Ann, as the wind would suffer, and our poor sails further, and came within sight thereof the other [next] morning; which Sabbath, being the thirteenth we kept on shipboard, was a marvelous pleasant day, for a fresh gale of wind, and clear sunshiny weather. This day we went directly before the wind, and had delight all along the coast, as we went, in viewing Cape Ann, the Bay of Saugust, the Bay of Salem, Marvil head,[12] Pullin Point, and other places; and came to anchor, at low tide, in the evening, at Nantascot, in a most pleasant harbor, like to which I had never seen, amongst a great many of islands on every side. I was exercised on shipboard both ends of the day. After the evening's exercise, when it was flowing tide again, we set sail, and came that night to anchor again before Boston, and so rested that night with glad and thankful hearts that God had put an end to our long journey, being a thousand leagues, that is, three thousand miles English, over one of the greatest seas in the world.

Now this our journey, by the goodness of our God, was very prosperous unto us, every manner of way. First of all, it was very safe, and healthful to us; for though we were in the ship a hundred passengers, besides twenty-three seamen, and twenty-three cows and heifers, three sucking calves, and eight mares, yet not one of all these died by the way, neither person nor cattle, but came all alive to land, and many of the cattle in better liking[13] than when we first entered the ship; and most of the passengers in as good health as ever, and none better than mine own family; and my weak wife, and little Joseph, as well as any other. Fevers, calentures, smallpox, and such diseases as have afflicted other passengers, the Lord kept from among us, and put upon us no grief in our bodies, but a little seasickness in the beginning of the voyage; saving that two or three seamen had the flux, and Richard Becon lost his right hand in the last storm, and one woman, and a little child of hers, towards the end of the journey, had the scurvey. The means of which infirmity in her we all conceived to be the want of walking and stirring of her body upon the deck; her manner being to sit much, between the decks, upon her bed. And a special means of the healthfulness of the passengers, by the blessing of God, we all conceived to be much walking in the open air, and the comfortable variety of our food. For seeing we were not tied to the ship's diet, but did victual ourselves, we had no want of good and wholesome beer and bread; and as our land stomachs grew weary of ship diet, of salt fish and salt beef, and the like, we had liberty to change for other food, which might sort better with our healths and stomachs; and therefore sometimes we used bacon and buttered peas, sometimes buttered bag-pudding, made with currants and raisins; and sometimes drink pottage of beer and oatmeal, and sometimes water pottage,[14] well buttered.

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[10] hauling

[11] A room used on war ships by the gunner and his mates, but on a merchant ship provided with lodgings for passengers as well.

[12] Marblehead. Generally spelled as above by the early settlers.

[13] favor, appearance

And though we had two storms by the way, the one upon Monday, the 3d of August, the other on Saturday, the 15th of the same, yet our gracious God (blessed and forever blessed be his name!) did save us all alive in them both, and speedily assuaged them again. Indeed, the latter of them was very terrible and grievous; insomuch, that when we came to land, we found many mighty trees rent in pieces in the midst of the bole, and others turned up by the roots, by the fierceness thereof. And a bark going from the Bay to Marvil head, with planters and seamen therein, to the number of about twenty-three, was cast away in the storm, and all the people therein perished, except one man and his wife,[15] that were spared to report the news. And the *Angel Gabriel,* being then at anchor at Pemmaquid, was burst in pieces and cast away in this storm, and most of the cattle and other goods, with one seaman and three or four passengers, did also perish therein, besides two of the passengers that died by the way, the rest having their lives given them for a prey.[16] But the *James,* and we that were therein, with our cattle and goods, were all preserved alive. The Lord's name be blessed forever!

Secondly, it was very delightful, while we took pleasure and instruction in beholding the works and wonders of the Almighty in the deep; the sea sometimes being rough with mighty mountains and deep valleys, sometimes again plain and smooth like a level meadow, and sometimes painted with variety of yellow weeds. Besides it was a pleasant thing to behold the variety of fowls and mighty fishes, swimming and living in the waters.

Thirdly, it was comfortable to us, by means of the fellowship of divers godly Christians in the ship, and by means of our constant serving God morning and evening every day, the daily duties being performed one day by Mr. Maude, another by myself, and the Sabbath's exercises divided, (for the most part), equally betwixt us two.

True it is, our journey was somewhat long. For though from Monday, the 22d of June, when we lost sight of our Old English coast, until Saturday, the 8th of August, when we made land again, at Menhiggin, it was but six weeks and five days, yet from our first entering the ship in King Road, on Saturday, the 23d of May, till our landing at Boston, in New England, on Monday, the 17th of August, it was twelve weeks and two days. For we lay at anchor in King Road eleven days, before we ever set sail, and three days at Lundy, and twelve days at Milford, and spent three days in tacking between King Road and Lundy, one day between Lundy and Milford, and eight days between Menhiggin and Boston. Nevertheless, our God preserved us all the while, and we had opportunity by these often delays to take in more hay, oats, and fresh water, and arrived in a good condition. Again let our gracious God be blessed forevermore! Amen.

1635 1846

JOHN WINTHROP

Born in Suffolk, England, 1588, died at Boston, 1649. He was of the English landed gentry, was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, was a student at the Inner Temple, and practiced law. He married Margaret, daughter of Sir John Tyndal. He put his whole estate into the Massachusetts Bay corporation, was elected first governor, came to America 1630, founded Boston, and was chosen governor for twelve of the remaining seventeen years of his life. He was conservative in politics and religion. His journal *History of New England*[1] was published in part at Hartford, 1790, and again with newly discovered parts at Boston, 1825-26.

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[14] Soup consisting mostly of vegetables and water.

[15] One Thatcher and his wife, cast on the island near Cape Ann, still called Thatcher's Island.

[16] What is saved in a contest, or from disaster: see, e. g., *Jeremiah* xxi. 9.

From HISTORY OF NEW ENGLAND[1]

. . . .

January, [1631] A house at Dorchester was burnt down.

February 11. Mr. Freeman's house at Watertown was burned down, but, being in the daytime, his goods were saved.

5. The ship *Lyon,* Mr. William Peirce, master, arrived at Nantasket. She brought Mr. Williams,[2] (a godly minister) with his wife, Mr. Throgmorton, —— Perkins, —— Ong, and others, with their wives and children, about twenty passengers, and about two hundred tons of goods. She set sail from Bristol, December 1. She had a very tempestuous passage, yet, through God's mercy, all her people came safe, except Way his son,[3] who fell from the spritsail yard in a tempest, and could not be recovered, though he kept in sight near a quarter of an hour. Her goods also came all in good condition.

8. The governor[4] went aboard the *Lyon,* riding by Long Island.[5]

9. The *Lyon* came to an anchor before Boston, where she rode very well, notwithstanding the great drift of ice.

10. The frost brake up; and after that, though we had many snows and sharp frost, yet they continued not, neither were the waters frozen up as before. It hath been observed, ever since this bay was planted by Englishmen, viz., seven years, that at this day the frost hath broken up every year.

The poorer sort of people (who lay long in tents, etc.[6]) were much afflicted with the scurvy, and many died, especially at Boston and Charlestown; but when this ship came and brought store of juice of lemons, many recovered speedily. It hath been always observed here, that such as fell into discontent, and lingered[7] after their former conditions in England, fell into the scurvy and died.

18. Captain Welden, a hopeful young gentleman, and an experienced soldier, died at Charlestown of a consumption, and was buried at Boston with a military funeral.

Of the old planters,[8] and such as came the year before, there were but two, (and those servants) which had the scurvy in all the country. At Plymouth not any had it, no not of those, who came this year, whereof there were above sixty. Whereas, at their first planting there, near the half of their people died of it.

A shallop of Mr. Glover's was cast away upon the rocks about Nahant, but the men were saved.

Of those which went back in the ships this summer, for fear of death or famine, etc., many died by the way and after they were landed, and others fell very sick and low, etc.

The *Ambrose,* whereof Capt. Lowe was master, being new masted at Charlton,[9] spent[10] all her masts near Newfoundland, and had perished, if Mr. Peirce, in the *Lyon,* who was her consort, had not towed her home to Bristol. Of the other ships which returned, three, viz., the *Charles,* the *Success,* and the *Whale,* were set upon by Dunkirkers,[11] near Plymouth in England, and after long fight, having lost many men, and being much torn, (especially the *Charles*) they gat into Plymouth.

The provision, which came to us this year, came at excessive rates, in regard of[12] the dearness of corn[13] in England, so as every bushel of wheat-meal stood us in fourteen shillings, peas eleven shillings, etc. Tonnage was at £6.11.

22. We held a day of thanksgiving for this ship's arrival, by order from the governor and council, directed to all the plantations.[14]

March 16. About noon the chimney of Mr. Sharp's house in Boston took fire, (the splinters being not clayed at the top[15]) and taking the thatch burnt it down, and the wind being N.W., drove the fire to Mr. Colburn's house, being [ ] rods off, and burnt that down also, yet they saved most of their goods.

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[1] The journal covers the period between March, 1630, and January, 1649. The manuscript was used by Cotton Mather in writing his *Magnalia Christi Americana,* and by other historians of New England.

[2] Roger Williams

[3] Son of a colonist named Way.

[4] Winthrop usually, as here, speaks of himself in the third person.

[5] In the lower Boston harbor.

[6] So great a number had come during the summer before, that houses could not be built at once for all.

[7] longed

[8] founders of the colony

[9] Charlestown

[10] lost

[11] Privateers from Dunkirk, a town on the French coast, at that time held by Spain, which was then at war with England.

[12] because of

[13] wheat

[14] All the settlements of the colony under Governor Winthrop's authority.

[15] This chimney was evidently built of split sticks of wood from which the usual inside mud plastering had partly fallen.

23. Chickatabot came with his sannops[16] and squaws, and presented the governor with a hogshead of Indian corn.

After they had all dined, and had each a small cup of sack and beer, and the men tobacco, he sent away all his men and women, (though the governor would have stayed them, in regard of the rain and thunder). Himself and one squaw and one sannop stayed all night, and, being in English clothes, the governor set him at his own table, where he behaved himself as soberly, etc., as an Englishman. The next day after dinner he returned home, the governor giving him cheese and peas and a mug and some other small things.

26. John Sagamore[17] and James his brother, with divers sannops, came to the governor to desire his letter for recovery of twenty beaver skins, which one Watts in England had forced[18] him of. The governor entertained them kindly, and gave him his letter with directions to Mr. Downing in England, etc.

The night before, alarm was given in divers of the plantations. It arose through the shooting off some pieces at Watertown, by occasion of a calf, which Sir Richard Saltonstall had lost; and the soldiers were sent out with their pieces to try the wilderness from thence till they might find it.

29. Sir Richard Saltonstall and his two daughters, and one of his younger sons, (his two eldest sons remained still in the country) came down to Boston, and stayed that night at the governor's, and the next morning, by seven of the clock, accompanied with Mr. Peirce and others in two shallops, they departed to go to the ship riding at Salem. The governor gave them three drakes[19] at their setting sail, the wind being N. W. a stiff gale and full sea. Mr. Sharp went away at the same time in another shallop.

About ten of the clock, Mr. Coddington and Mr. Wilson, and divers of the congregation, met at the governor's, and there Mr. Wilson, praying and exhorting the congregation to love, etc., commended to them the exercise of prophecy[20] in his absence, and designed those whom he thought most fit for it, viz., the governor, Mr. Dudley, and Mr. Nowell the elder. Then he desired the governor to commend himself and the rest to God by prayer; which being done, they accompanied him to the boat, and so they went over to Charlestown to go by land to the ship. This ship set sail from Salem, April 1, and arrived at London (all safe) April 29.

April. The beginning of this month we had very much rain and warm weather. It is a general rule that when the wind blows twelve hours in any part of the east, it brings rain or snow in great abundance.

4. Wahginnacut, a sagamore upon the River Quonehtacut which lies west of Narragansett, came to the governor at Boston, with John Sagamore, and Jack Straw, (an Indian, who had lived in England and had served Sir Walter Raleigh [?] and was now turned Indian again) and divers of their sannops, and brought a letter to the governor from Mr. Endicott to this effect: That the said Wahginnacut was very desirous to have some Englishmen to come plant in his country, and offered to find[21] them corn, and give them yearly eighty skins of beaver, and that the country was very fruitful, etc., and wished that there might be two men sent with him to see the country. The governor entertained them at dinner, but would send none with him. He discovered after, that the said sagamore is a very treacherous man, and at war with the Pekoath (a far greater sagamore). His country is not above five days' journey from us by land.

12. At a court[22] holden at Boston, (upon information to the governor that they of Salem had called Mr. Williams to the office of a teacher) a letter was written from the court to Mr. Endicott to this effect: That whereas Mr. Williams had refused to join with the congregation at Boston, because they would not make a public declaration of their repentance for having communion with the churches of England, while they lived there; and, besides, had declared his opinion that the magistrate might not punish the breach of the Sabbath, nor any other offence, as it was a breach of the first

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[16] married Indian men

[17] Sagamore is a general Indian term for chieftain. Here it is applied specifically.

[18] Probably, taken by force. Winthrop's MS. is obscure.

[19] Salutes from a small cannon called a drake.

[20] preaching (Mr. Wilson was pastor of the Boston church.)

[21] furnish

[22] A meeting of the stockholders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony which was a corporation controlling ecclesiastical as well as business affairs. The present case was considered very important. Churches fully furnished had both pastor and teacher. Both preached and administered the offices of the church, but the function of the former was especially to preach, of the latter to enforce doctrine and interpret scripture.

table;[23] therefore, they marveled they would choose him without advising with the council; and withal desiring him that they would forbear to proceed till they had conferred about it.

13. Chickatabot came to the governor, and desired to buy some English clothes for himself. The governor told him, that English sagamores did not use to truck;[24] but he called his tailor and gave him order to make him a suit of clothes; whereupon he gave the governor two large skins of coat beaver,[25] and, after he and his men had dined, they departed, and said he would come again three days after for his suit.

14. We began a court of guard[26] upon the neck between Roxbury and Boston, whereupon should be always resident an officer and six men.

An order was made last court that no man should discharge a piece after sunset, except by occasion of alarm.

15. Chickatabot came to the governor again, and he put him into a very good new suit from head to foot, and after he set meat before them; but he would not eat till the governor had given thanks, and after meat he desired him to do the like, and so departed.

21. The house of John Page of Watertown was burnt by carrying a few coals from one house to another: a coal fell by the way and kindled in the leaves.

One Mr. Gardiner, (calling himself Sir Christopher Gardiner, knight of the golden melice[27]) being accused to have two wives in England, was sent for; but he had intelligence, and escaped, and traveled up and down among the Indians about a month; but, by means of the governor of Plymouth, he was taken by the Indians about Namasket, and brought to Plymouth, and from thence he was brought, by Capt. Underhill and his lieutenant, Dudley, May 4, to Boston.

16. There was an alarm given to all our towns in the night, by occasion of a piece which was shot off, (but where could not be known) and the Indians having sent us word the day before that the Mohawks were coming down against them and us.

17. A general court[28] at Boston. The former governor was chosen again, and all the freemen of the commons[29] were sworn to this government. At noon, Cheeseborough's house was burnt down, all the people being present.

27. There came from Virginia into Salem a pinnace of eighteen tons, laden with corn and tobacco. She was bound to the north, and put in there by foul weather. She sold her corn at ten shillings the bushel.

June 14. At a court, John Sagamore and Chickatabot being told at last court of some injuries that their men did to our cattle, and giving consent to make satisfaction, etc., now one of their men was complained of for shooting a pig, etc., for which Chickatabot was ordered to pay a small skin of beaver, which he presently[30] paid.

At this court one Philip Ratcliff, a servant of Mr. Cradock, being convict, *ore tenus*,[31] of most foul, scandalous invectives against our churches and government, was censured to be whipped, lose his ears, and be banished the plantation, which was presently executed.[32]

. . . .

[Nov. 1633.] . . . The scarcity of workmen had caused them[33] to raise their wages to an excessive rate, so as a carpenter would have three shillings the day, a laborer two shillings and sixpence, etc., and accordingly those who had commodities to sell advanced their prices sometime double to that they cost in England, so as it grew to a general complaint, which the court, taking knowledge of, as also of some further evils which were springing out of the excessive rates of wages, they made an order that carpenters, masons, etc., should take but two shillings the day, and laborers but eighteen pence, and that no commodity should be sold at above four pence in the shilling more than it cost for ready money in England; oil, wine, etc., and cheese, in regard of the hazard of bringing, etc., [excepted]. The evils which were springing, etc., were: 1. Many spent much time idly, etc., because they could get as much in four days as would keep them a week. 2. They spent much in tobacco and strong waters, etc., which was a great waste to the commonwealth, which, by reason of so many foreign commodities expended,[34] could not have subsisted to this time, but that it was supplied by the cattle and corn, which were sold to new comers at very dear rates, viz., corn at six shillings the bushel, a cow at £20,—yea, some at £24, some £26,—a mare at £35, an ewe goat at £3 or £4; and yet many cattle were every year brought out of England, and some from Virginia. Soon after order was taken for prices of commodities, viz., not to exceed the rate of four pence in the shilling above the price in England, except cheese and liquors, etc.

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[23] The Christian church held that the first four commandments, of which the Sabbath law was one, written on the first table of stone, pertained to man's duties toward God. Williams maintained that these might not be enforced by magistrates. This incident was the first of the series that resulted in his banishment.

[24] usually engage in trade (Winthrop and the other gentlemen of the colony rarely forgot their social standing.)

[25] Probably, bundles of beaver skins that might be used for making coats.

[26] guard-house

[27] Probably a mistake for Golden Milice, or *Milice Dorée*, an order created by Pope Pius IV. in 1559 to reward distinction in arms, science, and the arts.

[28] Annual meeting of the Company for the election of officers. See note 22.

[29] Electors. At first the number was very small.

[30] immediately

[31] convicted orally, without formal indictment

[32] This barbarous punishment was severely censured in England.

[33] i. e., the workmen

. . . .

[July] 20. [1636] John Gallop, with one man more, and two little boys, coming from Connecticut in a bark of twenty tons, intending to put in at Long Island to trade, and being at the mouth of the harbor, were forced, by a sudden change of the wind, to bear up for Block Island or Fisher's Island, lying before Narragansett, where they espied a small pinnace, which, drawing near unto, they found to be Mr. Oldham's (an old planter, and a member of Watertown congregation, who had been long out a-trading, having with him only two English boys, and two Indians of Narragansett). So they hailed him, but had no answer; and the deck was full of Indians, (fourteen in all) and a canoe was gone from her full of Indians and goods. Whereupon they suspected they had killed John Oldham,[35] and the rather, because the Indians let slip and set up sail, being two miles from shore, and the wind and tide being off the shore of the island, whereby they drove towards the main at Narragansett. Whereupon they went ahead of them, and having but two pieces and two pistols, and nothing but duck shot, they bear up near the Indians, (who stood ready armed with guns, pikes, and swords) and let fly among them, and so galled them as they all gate under hatches. Then they stood off again, and returning with a good gale, they stemmed her upon the quarter[36] and almost overset her, which so frighted the Indians, as six of them leaped overboard and were drowned. Yet they durst not board her, but stood off again, and fitted their anchor, so as, stemming her the second time, they bored her bow through with their anchor, and so sticking fast to her, they made divers shot through her, (being but inch board) and so raked her fore and aft, as they must needs kill or hurt some of the Indians; but, seeing none of them come forth, they gate loose from her and stood off again. Then four or five more of the Indians leaped into the sea, and were likewise drowned. So there being now but four left in her, they boarded her; whereupon one Indian came up and yielded; him they bound and put into hold. Then another yielded, whom they bound. But John Gallop, being well acquainted with their skill to untie themselves, if two of them be together, and having no place to keep them asunder, he threw him bound into [the] sea; and, looking about, they found John Oldham under an old seine, stark naked, his head cleft to the brains, and his hand and legs cut as if they had been cutting them off, and yet warm. So they put him into the sea; but could not get to the other two Indians, who were in a little room underneath, with their swords. So they took the goods which were left, and the sails, etc., and towed the boat away; but night coming on, and the wind rising, they were forced to turn her off, and the wind carried her to the Narragansett shore.

. . . .

[September] 4. [1639] At the general court at Boston, one Mr. Nathaniel Eaton, brother to the merchant at Quilipiack, was convented[37] and censured. The occasion was this: He was a schoolmaster, and had many scholars,[38] the sons of gentlemen and others of best note in the country, and had entertained[39] one Nathaniel Briscoe, a gentleman born, to be his usher,[40] and to do some other things for him, which might not be unfit for a scholar. He had not been with him above three days but he fell out with him for a very small occasion, and, with reproachful terms, discharged him, and turned him out of his doors; but, it being then about eight of the clock after the Sabbath,[41] he told him he should stay till next morning, and, some words growing between them, he struck him and pulled him into his house. Briscoe defended himself, and closed with him, and, being parted, he came in and went up to his chamber to lodge there. Mr. Eaton sent for the constable, who advised him first to admonish him, etc., and if he could not, by the power of a master, reform him, then he should complain to the magistrate. But he caused his man to fetch him a cudgel, which was a walnut tree plant, big enough to have killed a horse, and a yard in length, and, taking his two men with him, he went up to Briscoe, and caused his men to hold him till he had given him two hundred stripes about the head and shoulders, etc., and so kept him under blows (with some two or three short intermissions) about the space of two hours, about which time Mr. Shepherd and some others of the town came in at the outcry, and so he gave over. In this distress Briscoe gat out his knife, and struck at the man that held him, but hurt him not. He also fell to prayer, (supposing he should have been murdered) and then Mr. Eaton beat him for taking the name of God in vain. After this Mr. Eaton and Mr. Shepherd (who knew not then of these passages)[42] came to the governor and some other of the magistrates, complaining of Briscoe for his insolent speeches, and for crying out murder and drawing his knife, and desired that he might be enjoined to a public acknowledgment,[43] etc. The magistrates answered that they must first hear him speak, and then they would do as they should see cause. Mr. Eaton was displeased at this, and went away discontented, etc., and, being after called into the court to make answer to the information which had been given by some who knew the truth of the case, and also to answer for his neglect and cruelty, and other ill usage towards his scholars, one of the elders (not suspecting such miscarriages[44] by him) came to the governor, and showed himself much grieved that he should be publicly produced,[45] alleging that it would derogate from his authority and reverence among his scholars, etc. But the cause[46] went on notwithstanding, and he was called, and these things laid to his charge in the open court. His answers were full of pride and disdain, telling the magistrates that they should not need to do any thing herein, for he was intended to leave his employment. And being asked why he used such cruelty to Briscoe his usher, and to other his scholars, (for it was testified by another of his ushers and divers of his scholars that he would give them between twenty and thirty stripes at a time, and would not leave till they had confessed what he required) his answer was that he had this rule, that he would not give over correcting till he had subdued the party to his will. Being also questioned about the ill and scant diet of his boarders, (for, though their friends gave large allowance, yet their diet was ordinarily nothing but porridge and pudding, and that very homely) he put it off to his wife. So the court dismissed him at present, and commanded him to attend again the next day, when, being called, he was commanded to the lower end of the table, (where all offenders do usually stand) and, being openly convict[47] of all the former offences, by the oaths of four or five witnesses, he yet continued to justify himself; so, it being near night, he was committed to the marshal till the next day. When the court was set in the morning, many of the elders[48] came into the court, (it being then private for matter of consultation) and declared how, the evening before, they had taken pains with him, to convince him of his faults; yet, for divers hours, he had still stood to his justification; but, in the end, he was convinced, and had freely and fully acknowledged his sin, and that with tears; so as they did hope he had truly repented, and therefore desired of the court that he might be pardoned, and continued in his employment, alleging such further reasons as they thought fit. After the elders were departed, the court consulted about it, and sent for him, and there, in the open court, before a great assembly, he made a very solid, wise, eloquent, and serious (seeming) confession, condemning himself in all the particulars, etc. Whereupon, being put aside, the court consulted privately about his sentence, and, though many were taken with his confession, and none but had a charitable opinion of it; yet, because of the scandal of religion, and offence which would be given to such as might intend to send their children hither, they all agreed to censure him, and put him from that employment. So, being called in, the governor, after a short preface, etc., declared the sentence of the court to this effect, viz.: that he should give Briscoe £30,

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[34] Winthrop seems to mean: foreign luxuries took money out of the colony in payment, and the colony would have been destitute of money, and hence come to naught, had it not been for the local trade in colonial grown cattle and corn.

[35] This murder led to the Pequot War.

[36] struck with their prow aft of the middle

[37] summoned to appear

[38] This school was really Harvard College, or, as Cotton Mather says, the "society of scholars to lodge in the new nests" as soon as they should be prepared for the college which had been founded three years before.

[39] hired

[40] assistant, instructor

[41] The Sabbath began at sunset of Saturday and ended at sunset of Sunday.

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[42] occurrences
[43] induced to confess publicly
[44] misdemeanors
[45] cited to appear
[46] legal proceedings
[47] convicted
[48] ruling officials of the church

[be] fined 100 marks,[49] and debarred teaching of children within our jurisdiction. A pause being made, and expectation that (according to his former confession) he would have given glory to God, and acknowledged the justice and clemency of the court, the governor giving him occasion, by asking him if he had aught to say, he turned away with a discontented look, saying, "If sentence be passed, then it is to no end to speak." Yet the court remitted his fine to £20, and willed Briscoe to take but £20.

The church at Cambridge, taking notice of these proceedings, intended to deal with him. The pastor moved[50] the governor, if they might, without offence to the court, examine other witnesses. His answer was that the court would leave them to their own liberty; but he saw not to what end they should do it, seeing there had been five already upon oath, and those whom they should examine should speak without oath, and it was an ordinance of God that by the mouths of two or three witnesses every matter should be established.[51] But he soon discovered himself; for, ere the church could come to deal with him, he fled to Pascataquack, and, being pursued and apprehended by the governor there, he again acknowledged his great sin in flying, etc., and promised (as he was a Christian man) he would return with the messengers. But, because his things he carried with him were aboard a bark there, bound to Virginia, he desired leave to go fetch them, which they assented unto, and went with him (three of them) aboard with him. So he took his truss[52] and came away with them in the boat; but, being come to the shore, and two of them going out of the boat, he caused the boatsmen to put off the boat, and because the third man would not go out, he turned him into the water, where he had been drowned, if he had not saved himself by swimming. So he returned to the bark, and presently they set sail and went out of the harbor. Being thus gone, his creditors began to complain; and thereupon it was found that he was run in debt about £1000, and had taken up most of this money upon bills he had charged into England upon his brother's agents, and others whom he had no such relation to. So his estate was seized, and put into commissioners' hands, to be divided among his creditors, allowing somewhat for the present maintenance of his wife and children. And, being thus gone, the church proceeded and cast him out. He had been sometimes[53] initiated among the Jesuits, and, coming into England, his friends drew him from them, but, it was very probable, he now intended to return to them again, being at this time about thirty years of age, and upwards. See after.

. . . .

[December 1640] . . . Mr. Nathaniel Eaton, of whom mention is made before, being come to Virginia, took upon him to be a minister, but was given up of God to extreme pride and sensuality, being usually drunken, as the custom is there. He sent for his wife and children. Her friends here persuaded her to stay awhile, but she went notwithstanding, and the vessel was never heard of after.

. . . .

[September 22. 1642] The court, with advice of the elders, ordered a general fast. The occasions were, 1. The ill news we had out of England concerning the breach[54] between the King and Parliament. 2. The danger of the Indians. 3. The unseasonable weather, the rain having continued so long, viz. near a fortnight together, scarce one fair day, and much corn and hay spoiled, though indeed it proved a blessing to us, for it being with warm easterly winds, it brought the Indian corn to maturity, which otherwise would not have been ripe, and it pleased God, that so soon as the fast was agreed upon, the weather changed, and proved fair after.

At this court, the propositions sent from Connecticut, about a combination,[55] etc., were read, and referred to a committee to consider of after the court, who meeting, added some few cautions and new articles, and for the taking in of Plymouth, (who were now willing) and Sir Ferdinando Gorges' province,[56] and so returned them back to Connecticut, to be considered upon against the spring, for winter was now approaching, and there could be no meeting before, etc.

The sudden fall of land and cattle, and the scarcity of foreign commodities, and money, etc., with the thin access of people from England, put many into an unsettled frame of spirit, so as they concluded there would be no subsisting here, and accordingly they began to hasten away, some to the West Indies, others to the Dutch, at

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[49] About £67.

[50] submitted the proposal to

[51] 2 *Corinthians* xiii. 1.

[52] bundle (of effects)

[53] sometime, at one time

[54] The Civil War in England.

[55] For mutual protection and defense.

[56] Afterwards Maine.

Long Island, etc., (for the governor there invited them by fair offers) and others back for England. Among others who returned thither, there was one of the magistrates, Mr. Humfrey, and four ministers, and a schoolmaster. These would needs go against all advice, and had a fair and speedy voyage, till they came near England, all which time, three of the ministers, with the schoolmaster, spake reproachfully of the people and of the country, but the wind coming up against them, they were tossed up and down, being in 10ber[57] so long till their provisions and other necessaries were near spent, and they were forced to strait allowance, yet at length the wind coming fair again, they got into the Sleeve,[58] but then there arose so great a tempest at S. E. as they could bear no sail, and so were out of hope of being saved (being in the night also). Then they humbled themselves before the Lord, and acknowledged God's hand to be justly out against them for speaking evil of this good land and the Lord's people here, etc. Only one of them, Mr. Phillips of Wrentham, in England, had not joined with the rest, but spake well of the people, and of the country; upon this it pleased the Lord to spare their lives, and when they expected every moment to have been dashed upon the rocks, (for they were hard by the Needles[59]) he turned the wind so as they were carried safe to the Isle of Wight by St. Helen's: yet the Lord followed them on shore. Some were exposed to great straits and found no entertainment, their friends forsaking them. One had a daughter that presently ran mad. . . . The schoolmaster had no sooner hired an house, and gotten in some scholars, but the plague set in, and took away two of his own children.

Others who went to other places, upon like grounds, succeeded no better. They fled for fear of want, and many of them fell into it, even to extremity, as if they had hastened into the misery which they feared and fled from, besides the depriving themselves of the ordinances[60] and church fellowship, and those civil liberties which they enjoyed here; whereas, such as staid in their places, kept their peace and ease, and enjoyed still the blessing of the ordinances, and never tasted of those troubles and miseries which they heard to have befallen those who departed. Much disputation there was about liberty of removing for outward advantages, and all ways were sought for an open door to get out at; but it is to be feared many crept out at a broken wall. For such as come together into a wilderness, where are nothing but wild beasts and beastlike men, and there confederate together in civil and church estate, whereby they do, implicitly at least, bind themselves to support each other, and all of them that society, whether civil or sacred, whereof they are members, how they can break from this without free consent, is hard to find, so as may satisfy a tender or good conscience in time of trial. Ask thy conscience, if thou wouldst have plucked up thy stakes, and brought thy family 3000 miles, if thou hadst expected that all, or most, would have forsaken thee there. Ask again, what liberty thou hast towards others, which thou likest not to allow others towards thyself; for if one may go, another may, and so the greater part, and so church and commonwealth may be left destitute in a wilderness, exposed to misery and reproach, and all for thy ease and pleasure, whereas these all, being now thy brethren, as near to thee as the Israelites were to Moses, it were much safer for thee, after his example, to choose rather to suffer affliction with thy brethren, than to enlarge thy ease and pleasure by furthering the occasion of their ruin.[61]

Nine bachelors commenced[62] at Cambridge; they were young men of good hope, and performed their acts,[63] so as gave good proof of their proficiency in the tongues and arts. (8.) [October] 5. The general court had settled a government or superintendency over the college, viz., all the magistrates and elders over the six nearest churches and the president, or the greatest part of these. Most of them were now present at this first commencement, and dined at the college with the scholars' ordinary commons, which was done of purpose for the students' encouragement, etc., and it gave good content to all.

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[57] Winthrop's usual abbreviation for the month of December. The year began with March.

[58] *La Manche* (Fr. sleeve), the English Channel.

[59] Rocks near the Isle of Wight.

[60] Services of the (Puritan) church, forbidden in England.

[61] Amid the trials of leadership Winthrop may often with good reason have felt himself to be the Moses of the New England people. It is well to remember that this passage was written by the same man who recorded in a single line the death of his son.

[62] graduated

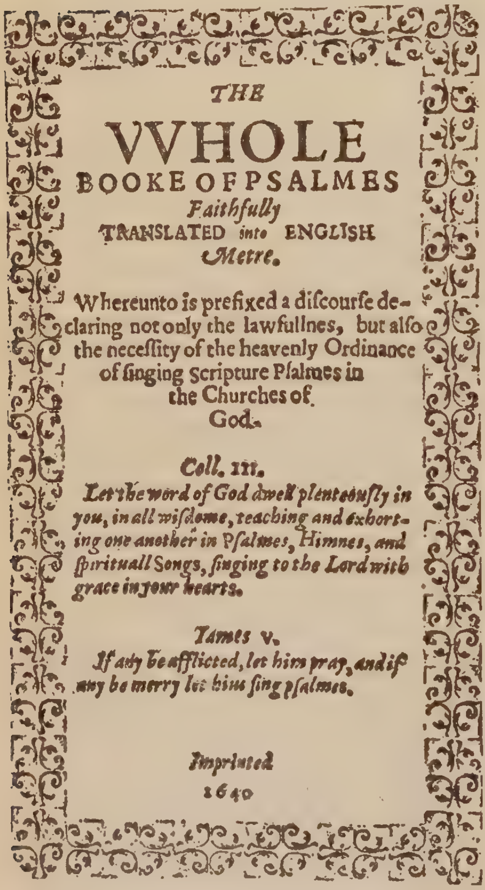
[63] parts; Cotton Mather says, "these exercises were, besides an oration usually made by the President, orations both salutatory and valedictory, made by some or other of the commencers, wherein all persons and orders of any fashion then present were addressed with proper complements, and reflections were made on the most remarkable occurrents of the preceding year; and these orations were made not only in Latin, but sometimes in Greek and in Hebrew also; and some of them were in verse and even in Greek verse as well as others in prose."—*Magnalia Christi Americana,* Book IV. Vol. ii. p 12 ed. 1853.

At this commencement, complaint was made to the governors of two young men, of good quality,[64] lately come out of England, for foul misbehavior, in swearing and ribaldry speeches, etc., for which, though they were *adulti*,[65] they were corrected[66] in the college, and sequestered, etc., for a time.

1790; 1825-26

. . . .

THE BAY PSALM BOOK[1]



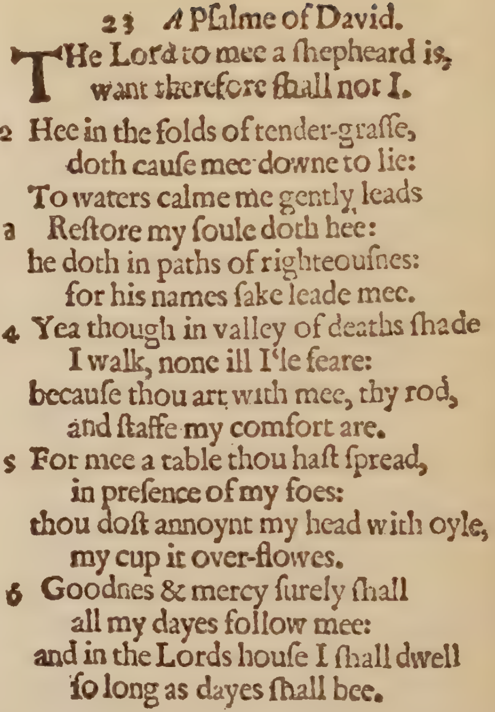
THE
VVHOLE
BOOKE OF PSALMES
Faithfully
TRANSLATED *into* ENGLISH
Metre.

Whereunto is prefixed a diſcourſe declaring not only the lawfullnes, but alſo the neceſſity of the heavenly Ordinance of ſinging Scripture Pſalmes in the Churches of God.

Coll. III.
Let the word of God dwell plenteouſly in you, in all wiſdome, teaching and exhorting one another in Pſalmes, Himnes, and ſpirituall Songs, ſinging to the Lord with grace in your hearts.

Iames v.
If any be afflicted, let him pray, and if any be merry let him ſing pſalmes.

Imprinted
1640



23 *A* Pſalme of David.
THe Lord to mee a ſhepheard is,
want therefore ſhall not I.
2 Hee in the folds of tender-graſſe,
doth cauſe mee downe to lie:
To waters calme me gently leads
3 Reſtore my ſoule doth hee:
he doth in paths of righteouſnes:
for his names ſake leade mee.
4 Yea though in valley of deaths ſhade
I walk, none ill I'le feare:
becauſe thou art with mee, thy rod,
and ſtaffe my comfort are.
5 For mee a table thou haſt ſpread,
in preſence of my foes:
thou doſt annoynt my head with oyle,
my cup it over-flowes.
6 Goodnes & mercy ſurely ſhall
all my dayes follow mee:
and in the Lords houſe I ſhall dwell
ſo long as dayes ſhall bee.

Psalme 24

A psalme of david:
THE earth Iehovahs is,
and the fulnesse of it:
the habitable world, & they
that there upon doe sit.
2 Because upon the seas,
hee hath it firmly layd:
and it upon the water-floods
most sollidly hath stayd.

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[64] birth [65] adults [66] Probably, whipped.

[1] The first English book printed in North America, at Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1640. Cotton Mather says of it, "About the year 1639, the New England reformers, considering that their churches enjoyed the other ordinances of Heaven in their scriptural purity, were willing that the ordinance of 'the singing of psalms' should be restored among them unto a share in that purity." A committee of three ministers did the work.

The attitude of the translators toward any artistic excellence is worth noting. In the preface they say: "If therefore the verses are not always so smooth and elegant as some may desire or expect; let them consider that Gods Altar needs not our polishings: *Ex.* 20. for wee have respected rather a plaine translation, then to smooth our verses with the sweetnes of any paraphrase, and soe have attended Conscience rather then Elegance, fidelity rather then poetry, in translating the hebrew words into english language, and Davids poetry into english meetre; that soe wee may sing in Sion the Lords songs of prayse according to his owne will; untill hee take us from hence, and wipe away all our teares, & bid us enter into our masters joye to sing eternall Halleluiahs."

The selections given follow the spelling and punctuation; and as nearly as possible the print of the original edition.

3 The mountaine of the Lord,
who shall thereto ascend?
and in his place of holynes,
who is it that shall stand?
4 The cleane in hands, & pure
in heart; to vanity
who hath not lifted up his soule,
nor sworne deceitfully.
5 From God he shall receive
a benediction,
and righteousnes from the strong-God
of his salvation.
6 This is the progenie
of them that seek thy face:
of them that doe inquire for him:
of Iacob 'tis the race. Selah.[2]
7 Yee gates lift-up your heads,
and doors everlasting,
be yee lift up: & there into
shall come the glorious-King
8 Who is this glorious King?
Iehovah, puissant,
and valiant, Iehovah is
in battel valiant.
9 Yee gates lift-up your heads,
and doors everlasting,
doe yee lift-up: & there into
shall come the glorious-King,
10 Who is this glorious-King?
loe, it is Iehovah
of warlike armies, hee the King
of glory is; Selah.

Psalme 121.

A song of degrees.

I TO the hills lift up mine eyes,
from whence shall come mine aid
2 Mine help doth from Iehovah come,
which heav'n & earth hath made.
3 Hee will not let thy foot be mov'd,
nor slumber; that thee keeps.
4 Loe hee that keepeth Israell,
hee slumbreth not, nor sleeps.
5 The Lord thy keeper is, the Lord
on thy right hand the shade.
6 The Sun by day, nor Moone by night,
shall thee by stroke *invade*.
7 The Lord will keep the from all ill:
thy soule hee keeps alway,
8 Thy going out, & thy income,
the Lord keeps now & aye.

1640

NATHANIEL WARD

Born in England, 1578, died there, 1652. He was A.M. of Emanuel College, Cambridge, 1603, studied and practiced law, traveled on the Continent, took orders in the English Church, was rector of Stondon Massey, and was excommunicated by Archbishop Laud for Puritan teachings in 1633. He emigrated to New England and was colleague pastor at Agawam, or Ipswich, 1634-6. He compiled the first Massachusetts code of laws, *The Body of Liberties*, 1641. Five years later he returned to England where he reëntered the ministry in which he served until his death. The *Simple Cobler*, written at Agawam, appeared in London in 1647 and went through four editions within a year.

From THE SIMPLE COBLER OF AGGAVVAMM IN AMERICA*[1]

SUTOR ULTRA CREPIDAM[2]

Either I am in an appoplexie, or that man is in a lethargie, who doth not now sensibly feele God shaking the heavens over his head, and the earth under his feet: the heavens so, as the sun begins to turne into darknesse, the moon into blood,[3] the starres to fall down to the ground; so that little light of comfort or counsell is left to the sonnes of men: the earth so, as the foundations are failing, the righteous scarce know where to finde rest, the inhabitants stagger like drunken men: it is in a manner dissolved both in religions and relations: and no marvell; for, they have defiled it by transgressing the lawes, changing the ordinances, and breaking the everlasting covenant. The truths of God are the pillars of the world, wheron states and churches may stand quiet if they will; if they will not, hee can easily shake them off into delusions, and distractions enough.

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[2] The word perhaps indicated a pause or choral direction in the original singing of the psalm.

*The selections from Ward are printed with the original spelling and punctuation.

[1] The complete title is as follows: "The Simple Cobler of Aggavvamm in America. Willing to help 'mend his Native Country, lamentably tattered, both in the upper-Leather and sole, with all the honest stitches he can take. And is willing never to bee paid for his work, by Old English wonted pay. It is his Trade to patch all the year long, gratis. Therefore I pray Gentlemen keep your purses. By Theodore de la Guard." The pseudonym is a translation of the author's own name, Theodore meaning "Gift of God" in Greek, as Nathaniel means this in Hebrew.

The book is a satire against any toleration by the Puritans of liberalism in religion, and also against dangerous social customs. Ward with many others of his generation felt that a tremendous moral crisis was on, shown by the persecution of the Puritans in England, the flight to America, and the civil war then in progress in the mother country. To them these events were the fulfilment of ancient prophecies, as the first sentence of the present selection (beginning the book) indicates.

Professor Tyler says: "Upon the whole, *The Simple Cobbler of Agawam* is a droll and pungent bit of early American prose, with many literary offences upon its head: an excessive fondness for antitheses; an untempered enjoyment of quirks and turns and petty freaks of phraseology; the pursuit of puns and metaphors beyond all decorum; the blurring of its sentences with great daubs and patches of Latin quotation; the willing employment of outlandish and uncouth words belonging to no language at all, sometimes huddled together into combinations that defy syntax and set all readers aghast."

[2] Literally, the cobbler beyond his last; that is, not sticking to his last: apropos of the Latin proverb, *ne sutor supra crepidam judicaret*, let not the cobbler pass judgment on things beyond his last.

Sathan is now in his passions, he feeles his passion[4] approaching; hee loves to fish in royled waters. Though that dragon cannot sting the vitals of the elect mortally, yet that Beelzebub[5] can fly-blow their intellectuals miserably: the finer religion grows, the finer hee spins his cobwebs, hee will hold pace with Christ so long as his wits will serve him. Hee sees himselfe beaten out of grosse idolatries, heresies, ceremonies, where the light breakes forth with power; he will therefore bestirre him to prevaricate evangelicall truths, and ordinances, that if they will needs be walking, yet they shall *laborare varicibus,*[6] and not keep their path, he will put them out of time and place; assassinating for his engineers,[7] men of Paracelsian parts;[8] well complexioned for honesty;[9] for, such are fittest to mountebanke his chimistry into sicke churches and weake judgements.

Nor shall hee need to stretch his strength over-much in this worke: too many men having not laid their foundations sure, nor ballasted their spirits deepe with humility and feare, are prest[10] enough of themselves to evaporate their owne apprehensions. Those that are acquainted with story know, it hath ever beene so in new editions of churches: such as are least able, are most busie to pudder in the rubbish, and to raise dust in the eyes of more steady repayrers. Civill commotions make roome for uncivill practises: religious mutations, for irreligious opinions: change of aire, discovers corrupt bodies; reformation of religion, unsound mindes. Hee that hath any well-faced phansy in his crowne, and doth not vent it now, fears the pride of his owne heart will dub him dunce for ever. Such a one will trouble the whole *Israel* of God[11] with his most untimely births, though he makes the bones of his vanity stick up, to the view and griefe of all that are godly wise. The devill desiers no better sport then to see light heads handle their heels, and fetch their carreers in a time, when the roofe of liberty stands open.

The next perplexed question, with pious and ponderous[12] men, will be: what should bee done for the healing of these comfortlesse exulcerations. I am the unablest adviser of a thousand, the unworthiest of ten thousand; yet I hope I may presume to assert what follows without just offence.

First, such as have given or taken any unfriendly reports[13] of us *New-English,* should doe well to recollect themselves. Wee have beene reputed a colluvies[14] of wild opinionists, swarmed into a remote wildernes to find elbow-roome for our phanatick doctrines and practises: I trust our diligence past, and constant sedulity against such persons and courses, will plead better things for us. I dare take upon me, to bee the herauld of *New-England* so farre, as to proclaime to the world, in the name of our colony, that all Familists, Antinomians, Ana baptists,[15] and other enthusiasts shall have free liberty to keepe away from us, and such as will come to be gone as fast as they can, the sooner the better.

Secondly, I dare averre, that God doth no where in his word tolerate Christian states, to give tolerations to such adversaries of his truth, if they have power in their hands to suppresse them.

Here is lately brought us an extract of a *Magna Charta,*[16] so called, compiled between the sub-planters[17] of a *West-Indian* island; whereof the first article of constipulation, firmly provides free stable-room and litter for all kinde of consciences, be they never so dirty or jadish; making it actionable, yea, treasonable, to disturbe any man in his religion, or to discommend it, whatever it be. Wee are very sorry to see such professed prophanenesse in *English* professors,[18] as industriously to lay their religious foundations on the ruine of true religion; which strictly binds every conscience *to contend earnestly for the truth: to preserve unity of spirit, faith and ordinances, to be all like minded, of one accord; every man to take his brother into his Christian care: to stand fast with one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel.* And by no meanes to permit heresies or erronious opinions: but God abhorring such loathsome beverages, hath in his righteous judgement blasted that enterprize, which might otherwise have prospered well, for ought I know; I presume their case is generally knowne ere this.[19]

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[3] *Joel* ii. 31.

[4] death throes

[5] prince of demons

[6] be afflicted with an enlarged vein, as in the thigh (hence, walk haltingly)

[7] Destroying for the purpose of making them his engineers or plotters.

[8] Paracelsus, 1493-1541, was a celebrated German-Swiss physician of great talent.

[9] honest by disposition (Men of ability and apparent honesty, might, if in the service of Satan, easily trick weak churches and men.)

[10] ready

[11] the entire Christian Church (the chosen ones taking the place, in God's favor, of the descendents of Israel)

[12] grave, deliberate

[13] See Winthrop's attitude in the same matter, p 23.

[14] offscourings, rabble

[15] Various dissenting sects holding views contrary to those of the Puritans.

[16] constitution (in reference to the Magna Charta or first written document of the English constitutional liberties)

[17] Settlers, not proprietors. The facts are mentioned in Johnson's *Wonder-Working Providence,* Book II, Chapter xx. See p. 38.

If the devill might have his free option, I beleeve he would ask nothing else, but liberty to enfranchize all false religions, and to embondage the true; nor should hee need: it is much to be feared, that laxe tolerations upon state-pretences and planting necessities,[20] will be the next subtle stratagem he will spread to distate[21] the truth of God and supplant the peace of the churches. Tolerations in things tolerable, exquisitely drawn out by the lines of the scripture, and pensill of the spirit, are the sacred favours of truth, the due latitudes of love, the faire compartiments of Christian fraternity: but irregular dispensations, dealt forth by the facilities of men, are the frontiers of error, the redoubts of schisme, the perillous irritaments[22] of carnall and spirituall enmity.

My heart hath naturally detested foure things: the standing of the Apocrypha[23] in the Bible; forrainers dwelling in my countrey, to crowd out native subjects into the corners of the earth; alchymized[24] coines; tolerations of divers religions, or of one religion in segregant[25] shapes: he that willingly assents to the last, if he examines his heart by day-light, his conscience will tell him, he is either an atheist, or an heretique, or an hypocrite, or at best a captive to some lust: poly-piety is the greatest impiety in the world. True religion is *ignis probationis,* which doth *congregare homogenea & segregare heterogenea.*[26]

Not to tolerate things meerly indifferent to weak consciences, argues a conscience too strong: pressed uniformity in these, causes much disunity: to tolerate more then indifferents,[27] is not to deale indifferently with God: he that doth it, takes his scepter out of his hand, and bids him stand by. Who hath to doe to institute religion but God. The power of all religion and ordinances, lies in their purity: their purity in their simplicity: then are mixtures pernicious. J lived in a city, where a Papist preached in one church, a Lutheran in another, a Calvinist in a third; a Lutheran one part of the day, a Calvinist the other, in the same pulpit: the religion of that place was but motly and meagre, their affections leopard-like.

If the whole creature should conspire to doe the Creator a mischiefe, or offer him an insolency, it would be in nothing more, than in erecting untruths against his truth, or by sophisticating his truths with humane medleyes: the removing of some one jota in scripture, may draw out all the life, and traverse all the truth of the whole Bible: but to authorise an untruth, by a toleration of state, is to build a sconce against[28] the walls of heaven, to batter God out of his chaire: to tell a practicall lye, is a great sin, but yet transient; but to set up a theoricall untruth, is to warrant every lye that lyes from its root to the top of every branch it hath, which are not a few.

. . . .

SHOULD I not keepe promise in speaking a little to womens fashions, they would take it unkindly: I was loath to pester better matter with such stuffe; I rather thought it meet to let them stand by themselves, like the *Quae Genus* in the grammer,[29] being deficients, or redundants, not to be brought under any rule: I shall therefore make bold for this once, to borrow a little of their loose tongued liberty, and mispend a word or two upon their long-wasted, but short-skirted patience: a little use of my stirrup will doe no harme.

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[18] Those professing religion.

[19] See Winthrop, p. 22.

[20] Necessities arising at the planting of a colony.

[21] disstate: lower in position

[22] incentives

[23] Books of the Old Testament of doubtful authenticity, retained by the English church, but not as a foundation for doctrine.

[24] counterfeit

[25] separated, sectarian

[26] a fire-test which doth bring together the like and scatter the unlike

[27] non-essentials

[28] battlement over against

[29] The reference is probably to some well-known rule of Latin grammar, known by the catch-words *quae genus.*

Ridentem dicere verum, quid prohibet?[30]
Gray gravity it selfe can well beteam,[31]
That language be adapted to the theme.
He that to parrots speaks, must parrotise:
He that instructs a foole, may act th' unwise.

It is known more then enough, that I am neither nigard, nor cinick, to the due bravery of the true gentry: if any man mislikes a bullymong drossock[32] more then I, let him take her for his labour: I honour the woman that can honour her selfe with her attire: a good text alwayes deserves a fair margent; I am not much offended, if I see a trimme,[33] far trimmer than she that weares it: in a word, whatever Christianity or civility will allow, I can afford with *London* measure:[34] but when I heare a nugiperous[35] gentledame inquire what dresse the queen is in this week: what the nudiustertian[36] fashion of the court; with egge[37] to be in it in all haste, whatever it be; I look at her as the very gizzard of a trifle, the product of a quarter of a cypher, the epitome of nothing, fitter to be kickt, if shee were of a kickable substance, than either honour'd or humour'd.

To speak moderately, I truly confesse it is beyond the ken of my understanding to conceive, how those women should have any true grace, or valuable vertue, that have so little wit, as to disfigure themselves with such exotick garbes, as not only dismantles their native lovely lustre, but transclouts[38] them into gantbar[39]-geese, ill-shapen-shotten[40]-shell-fish, Egyptian hyeroglyphicks, or at the best into French flurts of the pastery,[41] which a proper English woman should scorne with her heels: it is no marvell they weare drailes[42] on the hinder part of their heads, having nothing as it seems in the fore-part, but a few squirrils brains to help them frisk from one ill-favour'd fashion to another.

These whimm-crown'd shees, these fashion-fansying wits,
Are empty thin brain'd shells, and fidling kits.

The very troublers and impoverishers of mankind, I can hardly forbeare to commend to the world a saying of a lady living sometime with the queen of *Bohemia,* I know not where shee found it, but it is pitty it should be lost.

The world is full of care, much like unto a bubble;
Women and care, and care and women, and women and care and trouble.

The verses are even enough for such odde pegma's[43] I can make my selfe sicke at any time, with comparing the dazling splender wherewith our gentlewomen were imbellished in some former habits, with the gutfoundred[44] goosdom, wherewith they are now surcingled and debauched. Wee have about five or six of them in our colony: if I see any of them accidentally, I cannot cleanse my phansie of them for a moneth after. I have been a solitary widdower almost twelve years, purposed lately to make a step over to my native country for a yokefellow: but when I consider how women there have tripe-wifed[45] themselves with their cladments,[46] I have no heart to the voyage, least their nauseous shapes and the sea, should work too sorely upon my stomach. I speak sadly; me thinkes it should breake the hearts of English-men, to see so many goodly English-women imprisoned in French cages, peering out of their hood-holes for some men of mercy to help them with a little wit, and no body relieves them.

It is a more common then convenient saying, that nine taylors make a man: it were well if nineteene could make a woman to her minde: if taylors were men indeed, well furnished but with meer morall principles, they would disdain to be led about like apes, by such mymick marmosets. It is a most unworthy thing for men that have bones in them, to spend their lives in making fidlecases for fatulous[47] womens phansies; which are the very pettitoes[48] of infirmity, the giblets of perquisquilian[49] toyes. I am so charitable to think, that most of that mystery would worke the cheerfuller while they live, if they might bee well discharged of the tyring slavery of mis-tyring women: it is no little labour to be continually putting up English-women into out-landish caskes; who if they be not shifted anew, once in a few months, grow too sowre for their husbands. What this trade will answer for themselves when God shall take measure of taylors consciences is beyond my skill to imagine. There was a time when

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[30] *Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat?* What prohibits one speaking the truth in laughter?—Horace. *Satires,* I. i. 24-25.

[31] allow

[32] Bullimong is a variety of grains sown together producing a mixed crop. Drassock is an untidy woman.

[33] ornament

[34] Rather more than a full yard, customary among London merchants.

[35] trifle-inventing

[36] of the day before yesterday (Latin, *nudius tertius*)

[37] eagerness

[38] To clout is to patch; hence, transform by patchwork.

[39] Misprint: gant (gaunt) bar-geese, or barnacle geese. These birds of Arctic origin frequented British waters at some seasons.

[40] thin, from having spawned

[41] The place where pastry is made.

[42] trailing head-dresses

[43] A pegma is a framework used in theatrical representations, sometimes bearing an inscription. Here, perhaps, the verses, though uneven, are good enough to apply to such odd frameworks as women make of themselves, in displaying their clothes.

[44] on the point of starvation

[45] A tripe-wife is a woman who dresses tripe; used contemptuously.

[46] garments

[47] foolish

[48] pigs' feet when used for food (contemptuously, trifles)

The joyning of the red-rose with the white,
Did set our state into a damask plight.[50]

But now our roses are turned to *flore de lices,*[51] our carnations to tulips, our gilliflowers to dayzes, our city-dames, to an indenominable quaemalry[52] of overturcas'd[53] things. Hee that makes coates for the moone, had need to take measure every noone: and he that makes for women, as often, to keepe them from lunacy.

I have often heard divers ladies vent loud feminine complaints of the wearisome varieties and chargable changes of fashions: I marvell themselves preferre not a bill of redresse. I would *Essex* ladies would lead the *chore,*[54] for the honour of their country and persons; or rather the thrice honorable ladies of the court, whom it best beesemes: who may wel presume of a *le roy le veult*[55] from our sober King, a *les seigneurs ont assentus*[56] from our prudent peers, and the like *assentus,* from our considerate, I dare not say wife-worne commons: who I beleeve had much rather passe one such bill, than pay so many taylors bills as they are forced to doe.

Most deare and unparallel'd ladies, be pleased to attempt it: as you have the precellency[57] of the women of the world for beauty and feature; so assume the honour to give, and not take law from any, in matter of attire: if ye can transact so faire a motion among your selves unanimously, I dare say, they that most renite,[58] will least repent. What greater honour can your honors desire, then to build a promontory president[59] to all foraigne ladies, to deserve so eminently at the hands of all the English gentry present and to come: and to confute the opinion of all the wise men in the world; who never thought it possible for women to doe so good a work?

If any man think I have spoken rather merrily than seriously he is much mistaken, I have written what I write with all the indignation I can, and no more then I ought. I confesse I veer'd my tongue to this kinde of language *de industria*[60] though unwillingly, supposing those I speak to are uncapable of grave and rationall arguments.

I desire all ladies and gentlewomen to understand that all this while I intend not such as through necessary modesty to avoyd morose singularity, follow fashions slowly, a flight shot or two off, shewing by their moderation, that they rather draw countermont[61] with their hearts, then put on by their examples.

I point my pen only against the light-heel'd beagles that lead the chase so fast, that they run all civility out of breath, against these ape-headed pullets, which invent antique foole-fangles, meerly for fashion and novelty sake.

In a word, if I begin once to declaime against fashions, let men and women look well about them, there is somewhat in the business; I confesse to the world, I never had grace enough to be strict in that kinde; and of late years, I have found syrrope of pride very wholesome in a due *dos,*[62] which makes mee keep such store of that drugge by me, that if any body comes to me for a question-full or two about fashions, they never complain of me for giving them hard measure, or underweight.

But I addresse my self to those who can both hear and mend all if they please: I seriously fear, if the pious parliament doe not finde a time to state fashions, as ancient parliaments have done in part, God will hardly finde a time to state religion or peace: they are the surquedryes[63] of pride, the wantonnesse of idlenesse, provoking sins, the certain prodromies[64] of assured judgement, *Zeph.* i. 7, 8.

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[49] worthless

[50] Reference is to the "Wars of the Roses" between the rival houses of Lancaster and York, the former taking the red and the latter the white rose as a badge. The houses were joined in Henry VII. 1485. The "damask plight" is a figurative allusion to the happy blending of the houses of York and Lancaster which brought peace.

[51] *fleur de lis* (The idea of this and the following figures is that things of natural beauty are turned artificially into things more showy.)

[52] Perhaps, that which causes qualms: disgusting.

[53] covered with turquoises: over-adorned

[54] A dance or company of dancers, or a choir. Ward was an Essex man.

[55] the king wills it

[56] the lords have consented

[57] superiority, preëminence

[58] show reluctance

[59] striking precedent

[60] laboriously, not naturally

[61] up-hill, against the natural course

[62] proper dose

[63] arrogances

[64] precursors

It is beyond all account, how many gentlemens and citizens estates are deplumed by their feather-headed wifes, what usefull supplies the pannage[65] of *England* would afford other countries, what rich returnes to it selfe, if it were not slic'd out into male and female fripperies: and what a multitude of mis-imploy'd hands, might be better improv'd in some more manly manufactures for the publique weale: it is not easily credible, what may be said of the preterpluralities[66] of taylors in *London:* I have heard an honest man say, that not long since there were numbered between *Temple-barre* and *Charing-Crosse,*[67] eight thousand of that trade: let it be conjectured by that proportion how many there are in and about *London,* and in all *England,* they will appeare to be very numerous. If the parliament would please to mend women, which their husbands dare not doe, there need not so many men to make and mend as there are. I hope the present dolefull estate of the realme, will perswade more strongly to some considerate course herein, than I now can.

Knew I how to bring it in, I would speake a word to long haire, whereof I will say no more but this: if God proves not such a barbor to it as he threatens, unlesse it be amended, *Esa.* 7.20.[68] before the peace of the state and Church be well setled, then let my prophesie be scorned, as a sound minde scornes the ryot of that sin, and more it needs not. If those who are tearmed rattle-heads and impuritans[69] would take up a resolution to begin in moderation of haire, to the just reproach of those that are called Puritans and round-heads, I would honour their manlinesse, as much as the others godlinesse, so long as I knew what man or honour meant: if neither can finde a barbours shop, let them turne in, to *Psal.* 68.21. *Jer.* 7.29. *1 Cor.* 11.14.[70] if it be thought no wisdome in men to distinguish themselves in the field by the scissers, let it bee thought no injustice in God, not to distinguish them by the sword. I had rather God should know me by my sobriety, than mine enemy not know me by my vanity. He is ill kept, that is kept by his owne sin. A short promise, is a farre safer guard than a long lock: it is an ill distinction which God is loth to looke at, and his angels cannot know his saints by. Though it be not the mark of the beast, yet it may be the mark of a beast prepared to slaughter. I am sure men use not to weare such manes; I am also sure souldiers use to weare other marklets or notadoes[71] in time of battell.

. . . .

Goe on brave Englishmen,[72] in the name of God, go on prosperously, because of truth and righteousnes: yee that have the cause of religion, the life of your kingdome and of all the good that is in it in your hands: goe on undauntedly: as you are called and chosen, so be faithfull: yee fight the battells of the Lord, bee neither desidious[73] nor perfidious: you serve the King of Kings, who stiles you his heavenly regiments, consider well, what impregnable fighting it is in heaven, where the Lord of Hosts is your generall, his angels your colonels, the stars your fellow-souldiers, his saints your oratours, his promises your victuallers, his truth your trenches; where drums are harps, trumpets joyfull sounds; your ensignes Christs banners; where your weapons and armour are spirituall, therefore irresistable, therefore impierceable; where sun and wind cannot disadvantage you, you are above them; where hell it selfe cannot hurt you, where your swords are furbushed and sharpened by him that made their metall, where your wounds are bound up with the oyle of a good cause, where your blood runs into the veynes of Christ, where sudden death is present martyrdome and life; your funerals resurrections your honour glory; where your widows and babes are received into perpetuall pensions; your names lifted among Davids worthies; where your greatest losses are greatest gaines; and where you leave the troubles of war, to lye down in downy beds of eternall rest.

What good will it doe you, deare countrymen, to live without lives, to enjoy *England* without the God of *England,* your kingdome without a parliament, your parliament without power, your liberties without stability, your lawes without justice, your honours without vertue, your beings without wel-being, your wives without honesty, your children without morality, your servants without civility, your lands without propriety, your goods without immunity, the Gospel without salvation, your churches without ministery, your ministers without piety, and all you have or can have, with more teares and bitternesse of heart, than all you have and shall have will sweeten or wipe away?

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[65] acorns on which swine fed; here, apparently, refuse

[66] vast number

[67] The extreme ends of the Strand, a street in London less than a mile long.

[68] *Isaiah* vii. 20. To the Israelites, short hair signified penitence, mourning, or humility. The Puritans, however, affected short hair mainly because the Cavaliers wore theirs long, especially in "love locks." To the Puritans this was an abomination, and they expressed their disapproval by cropping their own hair.

[69] A pun on the word Puritan: (a) one who practices impurity, (b) one opposed to Puritanism.

[70] The Puritans were extreme in their literal interpretation of the Bible. This is understood when one reads the passages referred to.

[71] distinguishing marks or signs

[72] This passage is addressed to the author's fellow Puritans in England, then engaged in the civil war against Charles I.

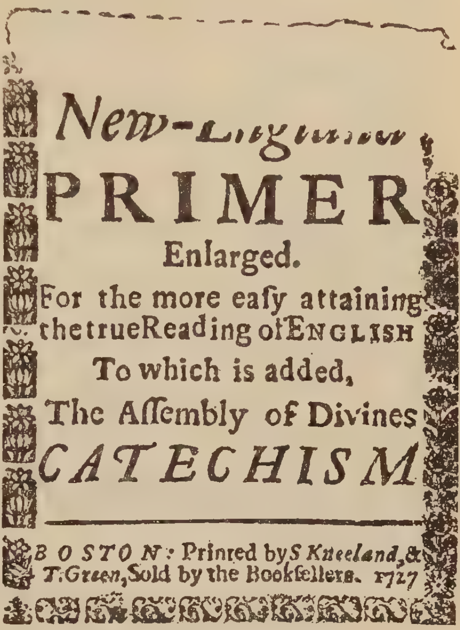
[73] slothful

Goe on therefore renowned gentlemen, fall on resolvedly, till your hands cleave to your swords, your swords to your enemies hearts, your hearts to victory, your victories to triumph, your triumphs to the everlasting praise of him that hath given you spirits to offer your selves willingly, and to jeopard your lives in high perils, for his name and service sake.

And wee your brethren, though we necessarily abide beyond *Jordan,*[74] and remaine on the American sea-coasts, will send up armies of prayers to the throne of grace, that the God of power and goodnesse, would incourage your hearts, cover your heads, strengthen your arms, pardon your sinnes, save your soules, and blesse your families, in the day of battell. Wee will also pray, that the same Lord of Hosts, would discover the counsels, defeat the enterprizes, deride the hopes, disdaine the insolencies, and wound the hairy scalpes of your obstinate enemies, and yet pardon all that are unwillingly misled. Wee will likewise helpe you beleeve that God will be seen on the mount, that it is all one with him to save by many or few, and that he doth but humble and try you for the present, that he may doe you good at the latter end. All which hee bring to passe who is able to doe exceeding abundantly, above all we can aske or thinke, for his truth and mercy sake in Jesus Christ. *Amen. Amen.*

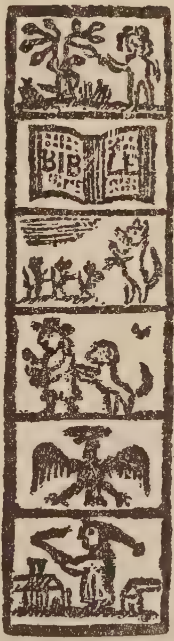
1645-1646 1647

THE NEW ENGLAND PRIMER[1]



New-England
PRIMER
Enlarged.
For the more eaſy attaining the true Reading of ENGLISH
To which is added,
The Aſſembly of Divines
CATECHISM

BOSTON: Printed by *S Kneeland,* & *T. Green,* Sold by the Bookſellers. 1727



A In *Adam's* Fall
We Sinned all.

B Thy Life to Mend
This *Book* Attend.

C The *Cat* doth play
And after ſlay.

D A *Dog* will bite
A Thief at night.

E An *Eagles* flight
Is out of ſight.

F The Idle *Fool*
Is whipt at School.

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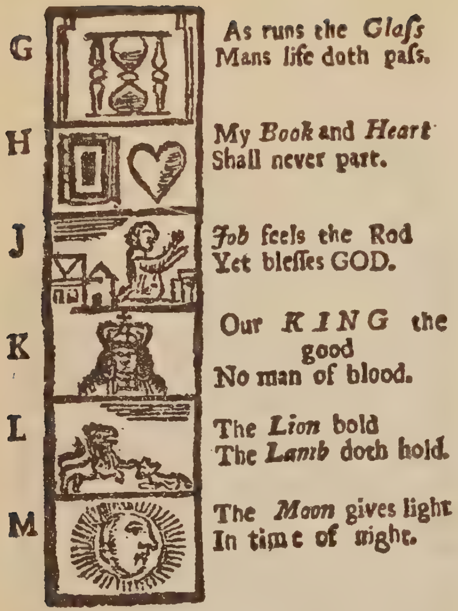
[74] Some of the Israelitish tribes coming up from Egypt remained on the east side of Jordan, sending aid, however, to their brethren who pushed on over the river and destroyed the heathen Canaanites living there.

[1] The *New England Primer* was practically the only textbook used in the primary schools of New England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its utility to the Puritans lay in the fact that it combined religious and secular



G
As runs the *Glaſs*
Mans life doth paſs.

H
My *Book* and *Heart*
Shall never part.

J
Job feels the Rod
Yet bleſſes GOD.

K
Our *KING* the good
No man of blood.

L
The *Lion* bold
The *Lamb* doth hold.

M
The *Moon* gives light
In time of night.

Nightingales sing,
In time of Spring.

The Royal Oak it was the Tree
That sav'd his Royal Majesty.[2]

Peter denies
His Lord and cries.

Queen Esther comes
In Royal state
To save the Jews
From dismal fate.

Rachel doth mourn
For her first born.

Samuel anoints
Whom God appoints.[3]

Time cuts down all,
Both great and small.

Uriah's beauteous wife,
Made David seek his life.[4]

Whales in the Sea
God's Voice obey.

Xerxes the great did die
And so must you and I.

Youth forward slips
Death soonest nips.

Zacheus he
Did climb the Tree
His Lord to see.[5]

EDWARD JOHNSON

Born at Canterbury, England, 1598, died, Woburn, Massachusetts, 1672. He was a carpenter by trade, emigrated with his family to Massachusetts in 1636, settling at Charlestown and afterwards at Woburn. He was prominent as a town official, captain of the train band, and representative of the town in the General Court (legislature), where he served on committees of military affairs. Johnson's *Wonder-working Providence* was published in London in 1654 under the title, not authorized by Johnson, *Historicall Relation of the First Planting of the English in New England*, etc.

From WONDER-WORKING PROVIDENCE OF SION'S SAVIOUR IN NEW ENGLAND

BOOK II. CHAPTER VI

Of the gracious goodness of the Lord Christ, in saving his New England people, from the hand of the barbarous Indians.[1]

Lastly, for the frontispiece[2] of their present distress, namely the Indian war, they,[3] with much meekness and great deliberation, wisely contrived how they might best help their fellow brethren; hereupon they resolved to send a solemn embassage[4] to old Canonicus, chief sachem of the narrow Ganset Indians, who being then well stricken in years had caused his nephew Miantonomo to take the Government upon him, who was a very stern man, and of a great stature, of a cruel nature, causing all

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instruction, as the title page announces. The date of the first edition is unknown, but it must have been after the middle of the seventeenth century; it continued to be printed in varying editions until the beginning of the nineteenth century.

[2] After the battle of Worcester, Charles II. escaped from the Parliamentary army by hiding in an oak.

[3] See 1 *Samuel* x. 1.

[4] See 2 *Samuel* xi.

[5] See *Luke* xix. 4.

[1] Pequot Indians, who lived in the valleys of the Thames and Mystic rivers in Connecticut, had committed depredations on the whites, had killed several of them, and now, attempting to get the Narragansetts to join them, and refusing to give up the murderers, they made general war on the whites. The men from Massachusetts under John Mason gathered at Hartford, and then setting sail from Saybrook and landing at Point Judith, where they were joined by several hundred Narragansetts and Niantics, they stormed the Pequot fort on the Mystic and annihilated the tribe, May 26, 1637.

[2] Figuratively; beginning.

[3] The people of Massachusetts.

[4] Dr. J. F. Jameson, the latest editor of Johnson, conjectures from the minuteness of the account that Johnson was one of the embassage.

his nobility and such as were his attendance to tremble at his speech. The people under his government were very numerous, besides the Niantic Indians, whose prince was of near alliance unto him. They were able to set forth, as was then supposed, thirty thousand[5] fighting men. The English sought by all means to keep these at least from confederating with the Pequots, and, understanding by intelligence that the Pequots would send to them for that end, endeavored to prevent[6] them. Fit and able men being chosen by the English, they haste them to Canonicus' court, which was about four score miles from Boston.

The Indian king, hearing of their coming, gathered together his chief counselors and a great number of his subjects to give them entertainment, resolving, as then, that the young king should receive their message, yet in his hearing.[7] They arriving, were entertained royally, with respect to[8] the Indian manner. Boiled chestnuts is their white-bread, which are very sweet, as if they were mixed with sugar; and, because they would be extraordinary in their feasting, they strive for variety after the English manner, boiling puddings made of beaten corn, putting therein great store of black berries, somewhat like currants. They having thus nobly feasted them, afterward give them audience in a state-house,[9] round, about fifty foot wide, made of long poles stuck in the ground, like your summer-houses in England, and covered round about and on the top with mats, save a small place in the middle of the roof, to give light and let out the smoke.

In this place sat their sachem, with very great attendance; the English coming to deliver their message, to manifest the greater state, the Indian Sachem lay along upon the ground, on a mat, and his nobility sat on the ground, with their legs doubled up, their knees touching their chin; with much sober gravity they attend the interpreter's speech. It was matter of much wonderment to the English, to see how solidly and wisely these savage people did consider of the weighty undertaking of a war; especially old Canonicus, who was very discreet in his answers. The young sachem was indeed of a more lofty spirit, which wrought his ruin, as you may hear, after the decease of the old king.[10] But, at this time, his answer was that he did willingly embrace peace with the English, considering right well that, although their number was but small in comparison of his people, and that they were but strangers to the woods, swamps, and advantageous places of this wilderness, yet, withal, he knew the English were advantaged by their weapons of war and especially their guns, which were of great terror to his people; and also he had heard they came of a more populous nation by far than all the Indians were, could they be joined together. Also, on the other hand, with mature deliberation he was well advised of the Pequot's cruel disposition and aptness to make war, as also their near neighborhood to his people, who, though they were more numerous, yet were they withal more effeminate, and less able to defend themselves from the sudden incursions of the Pequots, should they fall out with them. Hereupon he deems it most conducing to his own and his people's safety to direct his course in a middle way, holding amity with both.

The English return home, having gained the old king's favor so far as rather to favor them then the Pequots, who, perceiving their neighboring English[11] had sent forth aid to the Massachusetts government, thought it high time to seek the winning all the Indians they could on their side, and among others they make their address to old Canonicus, who, instead of taking part with them, labors all he can to hush the war in hand, laying before them the sad effects of war; sometimes proving sad and mournful to the very victors themselves, but always to the vanquished, and withal tells them what potent enemies they had to contend with, whose very weapons and armor were matter of terror, setting their persons aside; as also that Englishman was no much hoggery yet,[12] and therefore they might soon appease them, by delivering into their hands those persons that had been the death of any of them, which were much better than that the whole nation should perish.

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[5] A great over-estimate.

[6] anticipate

[7] Canonicus resolved that at this time Miantonomo should in his presence actually receive the message.

[8] taking into consideration

[9] House of ceremony or state. Mr. Albert Matthews traces the meaning of the word "state-house," state capitol building, to such usage as this.

[10] Some time later, Miantonomo, as chief of the Narragansetts, was captured in battle by the Mohegans. By Indian law his life was forfeit, but a faction among the whites intervened. The Mohegans then took Miantonomo before the Federal Commission at Boston. This body, advised by the church synod then in session, decided that the chief was the fair prey of his captors. The Mohegans thereupon led him back to the battle-field where they had captured him, and put him to death.

[11] The Connecticut colonists.

[12] Perhaps, demanded little thus far.

For the present the Pequots seemed to be inclinable to the old sachem's counsel, but, being returned home again among their rude multitude—the chief place of cowardly boasting—they soon change their mind; yet the old Sachem sends the English word he had wrought with them; and in very deed the English had rather make choice of peace then war, provided it may stand with truth and righteousness: and therefore send forth a band of soldiers, who, arriving in the Pequot country, address themselves to have[13] a treaty with them about delivering up the murderers. They, making show of willingness so to do, bade them abide awhile and they would bring them, and in the mean time they were conversant among the soldiers, and, viewing their armie,[14] pointed to divers places where they could hit them with their arrows for all their corslets. But their greatest number lying the while at the other side of a great hill, and anon appearing on the top of the hill in sight of the English, those Indians that were among the English withdrawing toward them, no sooner were they come to their companions, but all of a sudden they gave a great shout, and showed the English a fair pair of heels; who seeing it would not avail anything to follow them—they being far swifter of foot than the English—made their return home again.

This bootless voyage encouraged the Indians very much, who insulted over them at the fort,[15] boasting of this their deluding them: And, withal, they blasphemed the Lord, saying Englishman's God was all one fly, and that Englishman was all one squaw, and themselves all one Moor-hawks.[16] Thus by their horrible pride they fitted themselves for destruction. The English, hearing this report, were now full assured that the Lord would deliver them into their hands to execute his righteous judgment upon these blasphemous murderers; and therefore raised fresh soldiers for the war, to the number of fourscore or thereabout, out of the several towns in the Massachusetts; and although they were but in their beginnings,[17] yet the Lord, who fore-intended their work, provided for all their wants, and indeed it was much that they had any biscuit to carry with them in these times of scarcity, or any vessels to transport their men and ammunition: yet all was provided by the gracious hand of the Most High; and the soldiers, many of them, not only armed with outward weapons, and armor of defense, but filled with a spirit of courage and magnanimity to resist, not only men, but devils;—for surely he was more than ordinarily present with this Indian army, as the sequel will show: as also for their further encouragement, the reverend and zealously affected servant of Christ, Mr. John Wilson, went with the army, who had treasured up heaps of the experimental goodness[18] of God towards his people. Having formerly passed through perils by sea, perils by land, perils among false brethren,[19] etc. he followed the war purposely to sound an alarum before the Lord with his silver trumpet, that his people might be remembered before him: the soldiers arriving in safety at the town of Hartford, where they were encouraged by the reverend ministers there, with some such speech as follows.

"Fellow-soldiers, countrymen, and companions in this wilderness work, who are gathered together this day by the inevitable providence of the great Jehovah,—not in a tumultuous manner hurried on by the floating fancy of every high hot-headed brain, whose actions prove abortive, or if any fruit brought forth, it hath been rape, theft, and murder, things inconsisting with nature's light, then much less with a soldier's valor, —but you, my dear hearts, purposely picked out by the godly grave fathers of this government, that your prowess may carry on the work, where there justice in her righteous course is obstructed,[20] you need not question your authority to execute those whom God, the righteous Judge of all the world, hath condemned for blaspheming his sacred majesty, and murdering his servants: every common soldier among you is now installed a magistrate; then show yourselves men of courage. I would not draw low the height of your enemies' hatred against you, and so debase your valor. This you may expect: their swelling pride hath laid the foundation of large conceptions against you and all the people of Christ in this wilderness, even as wide as Babel's bottom. But, my brave soldiers, it hath mounted already to the clouds, and therefore it is ripe for confusion; also their cruelty is famously known, yet all true-bred soldiers reserve this as a common maxim,—cruelty and cowardice are unseparable companions. And, in brief, there is nothing wanting on your enemies' part, that may deprive you of a complete victory, only their nimbleness of foot, and the unaccessible swamps and nut-tree woods, forth of which your small numbers may entice, and industry compel them. And now to you I put the question, who would not fight in such a cause with an agile spirit, and undaunted boldness? Yet, if you look for further encouragement, I have it for you. Riches and honor are the next to a good cause eyed by every soldier, to maintain your own, and spoil your enemies of theirs. Although gold and silver be wanting to either of you, yet have you that to maintain which is far more precious, the lives, liberties, and new purchased freedoms, privileges, and immunities of the endeared servants of our Lord Christ Jesus, and of your second selves, even your affectionated bosom-mates, together with the chief pledges of your love, the comforting contents of harmless prattling and smiling babes; and, in a word, all the riches of that goodness and mercy that attends the people of God in the enjoyment of Christ, in his ordinances, even in this life. And, as for honor, David was not to be blamed for enquiring after it,[21] as a due recompense of that true valor the Lord hath bestowed on him: and now the Lord hath prepared this honor for you, O you courageous soldiers of his, to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and correction among the people, to bind their kings in chains, and nobles in fetters of iron, that they may execute upon them the judgments that are written![22] This honor shall be to all his saints. But some of you may suppose death's stroke may cut you short of this. Let every faithful soldier of Christ Jesus know that the cause why some of his endeared servants are taken away by death in a just war, as this assuredly is, it is not because they should fall short of the honors accompanying such noble designs, but rather because earth's honors are too scant for them, and therefore the everlasting crown must be set upon their heads forthwith. Then march on with a cheerful Christian courage in the strength of the Lord and the power of his might, who will forthwith enclose your enemies in your hands, make their multitudes fall under your warlike weapons, and your feet shall soon be set on their proud necks."

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[13] set about getting

[14] armor (Jameson's note.)

[15] exulted over them The fort was at Saybrook, Connecticut.

[16] Mohawks; perhaps, like "narrow Ganset" above, a case of popular etymology, or unscientific attempt to account for the meaning of an unusual word. The Mohawks, who lived west of the Hudson, were a warlike and powerful tribe holding suzerainty over some of the New England tribes.

[17] Nine years after the colony was founded.

[18] Goodness of God as proved by Mr. Wilson's own experience.

[19] 2 *Corinthians* xi. 26.

[20] These present soldiers were not prompted by the usual motives for war, nor were they expecting its usual results.

After the ministers of Christ had, through the grace that was given them, exhorted and encouraged these soldiers appointed for the work, they being provided with certain Indian guides who, with the close of the day, brought them to a small river where they could perceive many persons had been dressing of fish; upon the sight thereof, the Indian guides concluded they were now a-feasting it at their fort, which was hard at hand. The English calling a council of war, being directed by the speciallest providence of the most high God, they concluded to storm the fort a little before break of day; at which time they supposed the Indians being up late in their jolly feasting, would be in their deepest sleep. And surely so it was, for they now slept their last. The English keeping themselves as covertly as they could, approached the fort at the time appointed, which was builded of whole trees set in the ground fast, and standing up an-end about twelve foot high, very large, having pitched their wigwams within it, the entrance being on two sides, with intricate meanders[23] to enter. The chief leaders of the English made some little stand before they offered to enter, but yet boldly they rushed on, and found the passages guarded at each place with an Indian bow-man, ready on the string. They soon let fly, and wounded the foremost of the English in the shoulder, yet, having dispatched the porters, they found the winding way in without a guide, where they soon placed themselves round the wigwams and, according to direction, they made their first shot with the muzzle of their muskets down to the ground, knowing the Indian manner is to lie on the ground to sleep, from which they being[24] in this terrible manner awakened, unless it were such as were slain with the shot.

After this, some of the English entered the wigwams where they received some shot with their arrows, yet, catching up the firebrands, they began to fire them, and others of the English soldiers with powder did the same: the day now began to break; the Lord intending to have these murderers know he would look out of the cloudy pillar upon them.[25] And now these women and children set up a terrible outcry; the men were smitten down and slain as they came forth, with a great slaughter, the squaws crying out, "Oh much winn it,[26] Englishman," who, moved with pity toward them, saved their lives: and hereupon some young youth cried, "I squaw, I squaw," thinking to find the like mercy. There were some of these Indians, as is reported, whose bodies were not to be pierced by their sharp rapiers or swords of[27] a long time, which made some of the soldiers think the devil was in them, for there were some powwows[28] among them, which work strange things with the help of Satan. But this was very remarkable: one of them being wounded to death, and thrust through the neck with a halbert, yet, after all, lying groaning upon the ground, he caught the halbert's spear in his hand, and wound it quite round.

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[21] David's incursions upon his heathen neighbors may have required some justification even to the Puritans.

[22] *Psalms* cxlix. 7-9.

[23] winding entrances

[24] Construction is confused: were.

After the English were thus possessed of this first victory, they sent their prisoners to the pinnaces, and prosecute the war in hand to the next battalia[29] of the Indians, which lay on a hill about two miles distant; and indeed their stoutest soldiers were at this place, and not yet come to the fort. The English, being weary with their night work, and wanting such refreshing as the present work required, began to grow faint, yet having obtained one victory, they were very desirous of another: and, further, they knew right well, till this cursed crew were utterly rooted out, they should never be at peace; therefore they marched on toward them. Now, assuredly, had the Indians known how much weakened our soldiers were at present, they might have borne them down with their multitude,—they being very strong and agile of body,—had they come to handy-grips;[30] but the Lord, who would have his people know their work was his, and he only must order their counsels and warlike work for them, did bring them timely supply from the vessels, and also gave them a second victory, wherein they slew many more of their enemies, the residue flying into a very thick swamp, being inaccessible, by reason of the boggy holes of water, and thick bushes. The English drawing up their company beleaguered the swamp, and the Indians in the mean time skulking up and down, and as they saw opportunity they made shot with their arrows at the English, and then suddenly they would fall flat along in the water to defend themselves from the retaliation of the soldiers' muskets. This lasted not long, for our English, being but a small number, had parted themselves far asunder; but by the providence of the most high God, some of them spied an Indian with a kettle at his back going more inwardly into the swamp, by which they perceived there was some place of firm land in the midst thereof, which caused them to make way for the passage of their soldiers, which brought this war to a period. For although many got away, yet were they no such considerable number as ever to raise war any more; the slain or wounded of the English were, through the mercy of Christ, but a few. One of them, being shot through the body near about the breast, regarding it not till of a long time after, which caused the blood to dry and thicken on either end of the arrow so that it could not be drawn forth his body without great difficulty and much pain, yet did he scape his life, and the wound healed. Thus the Lord was pleased to assist his people in this war, and deliver them out of the Indians' hands, who were very lusty proper men of their hands,[31] most of them, as may appear by one passage which I shall here relate. Thus it came to pass, as the soldiers were upon their march, close by a great thicket, where no eye could penetrate far, as it often falls out in such wearisome ways where neither men nor beast have beaten out a path, some soldiers lingering behind their fellows, two Indians watching their opportunity, much like a hungry hawk, when they supposed the last man was come up, who kept a double distance in his march, they sudden and swiftly snatched him up in their tallens,[32] hoisting him upon their shoulders, ran into the swamp with him. The soldier unwilling to be made a Pope by being borne on men's shoulders,[33] strove with them all he could to free himself from their hands;

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[25] In reference to the pillar of cloud, the visible token of God's presence, which, by day, led the Israelites in their exodus from Egypt. *Exodus* xiii. 21, 22.

[26] *match winnet:* "very good." Jameson's note.

[27] for

[28] medicine men, sorcerers

[29] army

[30] hand-to-hand encounter

[31] Physically strong and handsome, and here, strong-armed. In this and other passages in these early extracts, note the Elizabethan English, transplanted to America.

[32] talons, hands

[33] In certain ceremonies at the Vatican, the Pope is borne in a chair upon the shoulders of his attendants.

but, like a careful commander, one Captain Davenport, then lieutenant of this company, being diligent in his place to bring up the rear, coming up with them, followed with speed into the swamp after him, having a very severe[34] cutlas tied to his wrist, and being well able to make it bite sore when he set it on, resolving to make it fall foul on the Indians' bones, he soon overtook them, but was prevented by the buckler they held up from hitting them, which was the man they had taken. It was matter of much wonder to see with what dexterity they hurled the poor soldier about, as if they had been handling a Lacedaemonian shield, so that the nimble Captain Davenport could not, of a long time, fasten one stroke upon them; yet, at last, dyeing their tawny skin into a crimson color, they cast down their prey, and hasted through the thickets for their lives. The soldier thus redeemed, had no such hard usage but that he is alive, as I suppose, at this very day.

The Lord in mercy toward his poor churches having thus destroyed these bloody, barbarous Indians, he returns his people in safety to their vessels, where they take account of their prisoners. The squaws and some young youths they brought home with them,[35] and finding the men to be deeply guilty of the crimes they undertook the war for, they brought away only their heads as a token of their victory. By this means the Lord struck a trembling terror into all the Indians round about, even to this very day.

Book II. Chap. XX

Of the planting of the one and twentieth Church of Christ at a Town called Gloucester, and of the Church and Town of Dover, and of the hardships that befell a certain people, who thirsted after large liberty in a warm Country.

For the government of this little commonwealth, this year was chosen for governor Richard Belingham, Esquire, and John Endicott Esquire for governors. The number of freemen added this year were about 503.[36]

There was another town and church of Christ erected in the Massachusetts government, upon the northern cape of the Bay, called Cape Ann, a place of fishing, being peopled with fishermen, till the Reverend Mr. Richard Blinman came from a place in Plymouth Patent, called Green Harbor,[37] with some few people of his acquaintance, and settled down with them, named the town Gloucester, and gathered into a Church, being but a small number, about fifty persons, they called to office this godly reverend man, whose gifts and abilities to handle the word is not inferior to many others, laboring much against the errors of the times, of a sweet, humble, heavenly carriage. This town lying out toward the point of the Cape, the access thereunto by land becomes uneasy, which was the chief cause it was no more populated. Their fishing trade would be very beneficial, had they men of estates[38] to manage it; yet are they not without other means of maintenance, having good timber for shipping, and a very sufficient builder, but that these times of combustion the seas throughout[39] hath hindered much that work; yet have there been vessels built here at this town of late. Their reverend Elder is here remembered.

Thou hast thy prime and middle age here spent,—
The best is not too good for him that gave it,—
When thou did'st first this wilderness frequent,
For Sions sake[40] *it was, that Christ might save it.*
Blinman be blithe[41] *in him, who thee hath taken*
To feed his flock, a few poor scattered sheep;
Why should they be of thee at all forsaken?
Thy honor's high, that any[42] *thou may'st keep.*
Wait patiently thy Master's coming, thou
Hast hitherto his people's portions dealt,
It matters not for high preferment; now
Thy crown's to come, with joys immortal felt.

About this time the people inhabiting the town of Dover,[43] although they lay out of any of these colonies mentioned, yet, hearing and seeing with what sweet harmony, both in churches and civil government, the Massachusetts peopled patent[44] was carried on prosperously, desired greatly to submit unto the same, by putting themselves under their protection; and for that end they petitioned their General Court[45] to admit of them, and administer justice as occasion served, by the hands of their godly magistrates; which accordingly was granted, and they have been partakers of the benefit hitherto, having also the benefit of some one minister to preach unto them, till it pleased God to fit stones by the continual hewing of his word for his temple-work, and they gathered a church according to the rule of the word, and called to office of a pastor one M. Maude, both godly and diligent in the work. This town is situate upon Piscataqua River, lying to the northeast of Boston, which river, although it be not nigh so broad as Merrimac River, yet is it navigable, being very deep, and her banks in many places filled with stately timber, which hath caused one or two sawmills to be continued; there they have a good quantity of meadow land, and good ground for Indian corn. To end this year 1641, the Lord was pleased to send a very sharp winter, insomuch that the harbor, where ships ordinarily anchor, was frozen over of such a thickness that it became passable, both for horse, carts, and oxen, for the space of five weeks.

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[34] sharp

[35] The women and children became the servants or slaves of their captors. Some of the boys were sold as slaves in the West Indies.

[36] In 1641, Bellingham was governor and Endicott lieutenant governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The number admitted to citizenship, as freemen, is, according to Dr. Jameson, an over-statement.

[37] From the territory covered by the grant or patent to the Plymouth Colony. Green Harbor is now Marshfield.

[38] capital

[39] England was then at war with Spain, and her commerce suffered accordingly.

[40] Zion's, the church's sake

[41] joyous

[42] any sheep (it being an honor to serve God at all)

[43] Dover in New Hampshire

[44] The Massachusetts Bay Colony.

And here the reader must be minded of the wonder-working providence of Christ for his poor churches, in altering the very season for their comfort, to the wonder of English and Indians, the winter and summer proving more moderate, both for heat and cold, unmasking[46] many by this means, it being a frequent thing with some, that, after the novelties of a new land began to be stale with them, and the sweet nourishment of the soul by the presence of Christ in the preaching of his word, began to dry up through the hot, heady conceit of some new conceived opinion, then they wanted a warmer country. And, every northwest wind that blew, they crept into some odd chimney-corner or other, to discourse of the diversity of climates in the southern parts, but chiefly of a thing very sweet to the palate of the flesh, called liberty,[47] which they supposed might be very easily attained, could they but once come into a place where all men were chosen to the office of a magistrate, and all were preachers of the word, and no hearers, then it would be all summer and no winter. This consultation was to be put in practice speedily, as all headstrong motions are, but the issue proved very sad, both to these and others also; for thus it befell, when the time of the year was come that a sea-voyage might be undertaken, they, having made sale of a better accommodation[48] than any they could afterward attain unto, prepare for the voyage with their wives and children, intending to land them in one of the Summer Islands, called the Isle of Providence; and having wind and seas favoring them, as they supposed, or to speak more proper, the provident hand of the most high God directing it, they were brought so near the shore for convenient landing, that they might have heaved a biscuit cake on land. Their pilot wondering he could not see the English colors on the fort, he began to mistrust the island was taken, and more especially, because they saw not the people appear upon the shores as they usually did when any vessel was a-coming in, but now and then they saw some people afar off wafting to them to come in, till they were even come to an anchor, and then by the hoisting up and down the heads of those on shore, they were fully confirmed in it, that the island was taken, as indeed it was, by the Spaniards, who, as soon as they tacked about to be gone, made shot at them, and, being in great fear, they made all the sail they could; but before they could get out of shot, the master of the vessel was slain, the mainsail shot through, and the barque also. The people some of them returned back again for New England, being sore abashed at this providence that befell them, that they would never seek to be governed by liberty again to this very day; yet others there are were so strongly bent for the heat of liberty, that they endured much pinching penury upon an uninhabited island, till at length meeting some others like-minded with themselves, they made a voyage to another island. The chiefest part of their charter of freedom was this: that no man upon pain of death should speak against another's religion; where they continued, till some of them were famished, and others even forced to feed on rats, and any other thing they could find to sustain nature, till the provident hand of God brought a ship to the place, which took them off the island, and saved their lives. But upon this the winter's discourse ceased, and projects for a warmer country were hushed and done.[49]

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[45] The business corporation of the colony.

[46] proving their religious and civic loyalty

[47] This revolt early in the history of the colony against ecclesiastical and perhaps political oppression, and the attitude toward it of both Ward (p. 26) and Johnson show plainly that, to the Puritan magistrates and ministers, the object of the colony was not liberty of conscience but rather theocracy. Fortunately, the right conceded by the Puritans, that each man might judge for himself what the Bible taught, made in the end both for freedom of conscience and democracy.

Jameson notes that the island to which these dissenters removed was in the Caribbean Sea, off the coast of Nicaragua. It had been granted by Charles I. to Puritans in 1630, but in 1641, just before the arrival of the Massachusetts party, it was captured by the Spanish.

[48] exchanged good conditions of living for poorer

1650 1654

ROGER WILLIAMS

Born, London, 1605, died, Rhode Island, 1683. Williams was a protégé of Sir Edward Coke, by whom he was sent to Cambridge, where he graduated, 1627. He perhaps was licensed to preach in the English Church, but came to Massachusetts in 1631. Because of liberal ecclesiastic views, he was banished from Massachusetts in 1635, founded Providence in 1636, and obtained a charter for the colony in 1643, visiting England for this purpose. In 1651 he was again in England, and on his return to Rhode Island was chosen president (governor). His chief works are *A Key to the Language of America*, 1644; *The Bloody Tenet*, 1644; *The Hireling Ministry None of Christ's*, 1652; *George Fox Digg'd Out of His Burrows*, 1676.

From THE BLOODY TENET OF PERSECUTION.[1]

CHAPTER I.

Truth. In what dark corner of the world, sweet Peace, are we two met?[2] How hath this present evil world banished me from all the coasts and quarters of it? And how hath the righteous God in judgment taken thee from the earth, *Rev.* vi. 4.

Truth and Peace rarely and seldom meet.

Peace. 'Tis lamentably true, blessed Truth. The foundations of the world have long been out of course: the gates of earth and hell have conspired together to intercept our joyful meeting and our holy kisses.[3] With what a wearied, tired wing have I flown over nations, kingdoms, cities, towns, to find out precious Truth?

Truth. The like inquiries in my flights and travels have I made for Peace and still am told she hath left the earth, and fled to heaven.

Peace. Dear Truth, what is the earth but a dungeon of darkness, where Truth is not?

Truth. And what's the Peace thereof but a fleeting dream, thine ape and counterfeit?

Peace. O where's the promise of the God of heaven, that righteousness and peace shall kiss each other?

Truth. Patience, sweet Peace, these heavens and earth are growing old, and shall be changed like a garment, *Psal.* cii. They shall melt away, and be burnt up with all the works that are therein; and the most high eternal Creator, shall gloriously create new heavens and new earth, wherein dwells righteousness, 2 *Pet.* 3. Our kisses then shall have their endless date[4] of pure and sweetest joys. Till then both thou and I must hope and wait, and bear the fury of the dragon's wrath, whose monstrous lies and furies shall with himself be cast into the lake of fire, the second death, *Revel.* xx.[5]

Peace. Most precious Truth, thou knowest we are both pursued and laid in wait for. Mine heart is full of sighs, mine eyes with tears. Where can I better vent my full oppressed bosom, than into thine, whose faithful lips may for these few hours revive my drooping wandering spirits, and here begin to wipe tears from mine eyes and the eyes of my dearest children?

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[49] This attempt at colonization is noted in Winthrop, pp. 22, 23.

[1] The full title is:

THE
BLOVDY TENENT,
OF PERSECUTION, FOR CAUSE OF
CONSCIENCE, DISCUSSED, IN
A Conference betweene
TRVTH and PEACE.
VVho,
In all tender Affection, present to the High Court of Parliament, (as the Result of their Discourse) these, (amongst other Passages) of highest consideration.

As the title page announces, the book is addressed to the British Parliament.

The Bloudy Tenent originated, according to Williams's account, as follows: To John Cotton, minister at Boston, had been proposed the question, "Whether persecution for cause of conscience be not against the doctrine of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings." Cotton had replied at some length maintaining, among other things, "that Christians sinning against light of faith and conscience may justly be censured by the Church with excommunication, and by the civil sword also, in case they shall corrupt others to the perdition of their souls."

It is against this opinion, which may be said to represent the majority opinion of the Massachusetts Puritans, that *The Bloudy Tenent* is directed. The book was written while Williams was in London, and was published there. It is interesting to observe that it appeared in the same year with the more famous *Areopagitica* of John Milton, both of them documents in the long contest for the freedom of the human spirit. Later, Williams came to know Milton personally.

[2] In reading this selection it is well to note the considerate mood in which it is written, a spirit seldom observed in religious controversies of that time. Cotton and Williams do not seem to have been on unfriendly terms notwithstanding their religious differences. The dialogue form for a discussion of this nature was frequently used during the seventeenth century. To *The Bloudy Tenent* Cotton published a rejoinder, *The Bloudy Tenent Washed and made White in the Bloude of the Lamb*, London, 1647, and Williams replied once more with *The Bloudy Tenent yet more Bloudy by Cotton's Endeavour to Wash it White in the Bloud of the Lambe*, London, 1652.

[3] *Psalms* xxxv. 10.

[4] duration

[5] Williams, like many other Puritan thinkers, believed that the second coming of Christ and the final punishment of Satan were at hand.

Truth. Sweet daughter of the God of Peace, begin; pour out thy sorrows, vent thy complaints. How joyful am I to improve these precious minutes to revive our hearts, both thine and mine, and the hearts of all that love the truth and peace, *Zach.* viii.

Peace. Dear Truth, I know thy birth, thy nature, thy delight. They that know thee will prize thee far above themselves and lives, and sell themselves to buy thee. Well spake that famous Elizabeth to her famous attorney Sir Edward Coke:[6] "Mr. Attorney, go on as thou hast begun and still plead, not *pro domina regina,* but *pro domina veritate.*[7]

Truth. 'Tis true, my crown is high, my scepter's strong to break down strongest holds, to throw down highest crowns of all that plead, though but in thought, against me. Some few there are, but oh! how few, are valiant for the truth, and dare to plead my cause, as my witnesses in sack-cloth, *Revel.* xi., while all men's tongues are bent like bows to shoot out lying words against me.

Peace. O how could I spend eternal days and endless dates at thy holy feet, in listening to the precious oracles of thy mouth! All the words of thy mouth are truth, and there is no iniquity in them; thy lips drop as the honey-comb. But oh! since we must part anon, let us, as thou saidst, improve our minutes and, according as thou promisedst, revive me with thy words, which are sweeter than the honey and the honey-comb.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Christ Jesus furnisheth his shepherds with power sufficient to drive away wolves

Fourthly, I ask, Were not these elders or ministers of the church of Ephesus sufficiently furnished from the Lord Jesus to drive away these mystical and spiritual wolves?[8]

Truth. True it is, against the inhuman and uncivil violence of persecutors, they were not, nor are God's children able and provided; but to resist, drive away, expel, and kill spiritual and mystical wolves by the word of the Lord,—none are fit to be Christ's shepherds who are not able, *Tit.* i. 9, 10, 11. The Bishop or overseer must be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers; which gainsayers to be by him convinced, that is, overcome or subdued, though it may be in themselves ever obstinate, they were, I say, as greedy wolves in Crete, as any could be at Ephesus; for so saith Paul, verse 10. They were unruly and vain talkers, deceivers, whose mouths must be stopped, who subverted whole houses; and yet Titus—and every ordinary shepherd of a flock of Christ—had ability sufficient to defend the flock from spiritual and mystical wolves without the help of the civil magistrate.

Job xxvi. 1, 2.

Peace. In this respect, therefore, methinks we may fitly allude to that excellent answer of Job to Bildad, the Shuhite, *Job* xxvi. "How hast thou helped him that is without power? How savest thou the arm that hath no strength? How hast thou counseled him that hath no wisdom? How hast thou plentifully declared the thing as it is?"

5. Lastly, I ask whether, as men deal with wolves, these wolves at Ephesus were intended by Paul to be killed, their brains dashed out with stones, staves, halberts, guns, etc., in the hands of the elders of Ephesus, etc.

Truth. Doubtless, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, all such mystical wolves must spiritually and mystically so be slain. And the witnesses of truth, *Revel.* xi. speak fire, and kill all that hurt them by that fiery word of God, and that two-edged sword in their hand, *Psal.* cxlix.

Unmerciful and bloody doctrine.

But oh! what streams of the blood of saints have been and must be shed until the lamb have obtained the victorie, *Revel.* xvii. by this unmerciful—and in the state of the New Testament, when the church is spread all the world over—most bloody doctrine, viz. The wolves, (heretics), are to be driven away, their brains knocked out and killed, the poor sheep to be preserved for whom Christ died, etc.

Is not this to take Christ Jesus, and make him a temporal king by force? *John* vi. 15. Is not this to make his kingdom of this world, to set up a civil and temporal Israel, to bound out new earthly holy lands of Canaan, yea and to set up a Spanish Inquisition in all parts of the world, to the speedy destruction of thousands, yea of millions of souls, and the frustrating of the sweet end of the coming of the Lord Jesus, to wit, to save men's souls—and to that end not to destroy their bodies—by his own blood?

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[6] Sir Edward Coke was the most famous English jurist and legal commentator of his day.

[7] not for sovereign queen but for sovereign truth

[8] Peace is speaking of Paul's warning to the elders or bishops of the church at Ephesus that "wolves" would enter into and not spare the Christian flock that had been gathered in that city. *Acts* xx. 17-35.

CHAPTER XLIV

John vi. 15, 2 *Cor.* x. 4. discussed.

Peace. The next scripture produced against such persecution, is 2 *Cor.* x. 4. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, and having in a readiness to avenge all disobedience," etc.

Unto which it is answered,[9] "When Paul saith, 'The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual,' he denieth not civil weapons of justice to the civil magistrate, *Rom.* xiii. but only to church officers; and yet the weapons of church officers he acknowledgeth to be such, as though they be spiritual, yet are ready to take vengeance on all disobedience, 2 *Cor.* x. 6. which hath reference, amongst other ordinances, to the censures of the church against scandalous offenders."

Truth. I acknowledge that herein the spirit of God denieth not civil weapons of justice to the civil magistrate, which the scripture he quotes, *Rom.* xiii. abundantly testify.

Yet withal I must ask why he here affirmeth the apostle denies not civil weapons of justice to the civil magistrate? of which there is no question, unless that, according to his scope of proving persecution for conscience, he intends withal that the apostle denies not civil weapons of justice to the civil magistrate in spiritual and religious causes; the contrary whereunto, the Lord assisting, I shall evince, both from this very scripture, and his own observation, and lastly by that xiiith of the *Romans,* by himself quoted.

First, then, from this scripture and his own observation: the weapons of church officers, saith he, are such which, though they be spiritual, are ready to take vengeance on all disobedience; which hath reference, saith he, amongst other ordinances, to the censures of the church against scandalous offenders.

The difference of the civil and spiritual estate.

I hence observe that, there being in this scripture held forth a two-fold state, a civil state and a spiritual, civil officers and spiritual, civil weapons and spiritual weapons, civil vengeance and punishment, and a spiritual vengeance and punishment: although the spirit speaks not here expressly of civil magistrates and their civil weapons, yet these states being of different natures and considerations, as far differing as spirit from flesh, I first observe that civil weapons are most improper and unfitting in matters of the spiritual state and kingdom, though in the civil state most proper and suitable.

Civil weapons most improper in spiritual causes: fitly exemplified by that similitude, 2 *Cor.* x. 4.

CHAPTER XLV

For, to keep to the similitude which the Spirit useth, for instance, to batter down a stronghold, high wall, fort, tower, or castle, men bring not a first and second admonition, and after obstinacy, excommunication, which are spiritual weapons concerning them that be in the church; nor exhortation to repent and be baptized, to believe in the Lord Jesus, etc., which are proper weapons to them that be without, etc. But to take a stronghold, men bring canons, culverins, saker,[10] bullets, powder, muskets, swords, pikes, etc., and these to this end are weapons effectual and proportionable.

Spiritual weapons, only effectual in spiritual and soul causes.

On the other side, to batter down idolatry, false worship, heresy, schism, blindness, hardness, out of the soul and spirit, it is vain, improper, and unsuitable to bring those weapons which are used by persecutors,—stocks, whips, prisons, swords, gibbets, stakes, etc. Where these seem to prevail with some cities or kingdoms, a stronger force sets up again what a weaker pulled down; but against these spiritual strongholds in the souls of men, spiritual artillery and weapons are proper, which are mighty through God to subdue and bring under the very thought to obedience, or else to bind fast the soul with chains of darkness, and lock it up in the prison of unbelief and hardness to eternity.

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[9] The quotation is from Cotton.

[10] Culverins and sakers are both light cannon.

Civil weapons not only improper, but unnecessary in spiritual causes.

2. I observe that as civil weapons are improper in this business, and never able to effect ought in the soul, so, although they were proper, yet they are unnecessary; for if, as the Spirit here saith, and the answerer grants, spiritual weapons in the hand of church officers are able and ready to take vengeance on all disobedience, that is, able and mighty, sufficient and ready for the Lord's work either to save the soul, or to kill the soul of whomsoever, be the party or parties opposite, in which respect I may again remember that speech of Job, "How hast thou helped him that hath no power?" *Job* xxvi.

No earthly kings or governors will be so served, as we pretend to serve the King of Kings.

Peace. Offer this, as Malachi once spake, to the governors the kings of the earth, when they besiege, beleaguer, and assault great cities, castles, forts, etc., should any subject pretending his service bring store of pins, sticks, straws, bulrushes, to beat and batter down stone walls, mighty bulwarks, what might his expectation and reward be, but at least the censure of a man distraught, beside himself? etc.

Psalms xlv. The white troopers.

Truth. What shall we then conceive of his displeasure, who is the chief or prince of the kings of the earth, and rides upon the word of truth and meekness, which is that white horse, *Rev.* vi. and *Rev.* xix. with his holy witnesses the white troopers upon white horses, when to his help and aid men bring and add such unnecessary, improper and weak munition?

Spiritual ammunition. *Eph.* vi. applied.

Material and spiritual artillery unfitly joined together.

An alarm to civil or earthly rulers.

Will the Lord Jesus,—did he ever in his own person practice, or did he appoint to,—join to his breastplate of righteousness, the breastplate of iron and steel? to the helmet of righteousness and salvation in Christ, an helmet and crest of iron, brass, or steel, a target of wood to his shield of faith? his[11] two-edged sword coming forth of the mouth of Jesus, the material sword, the work of smiths and cutlers? or a girdle of shoes' leather to the girdle of truth, etc.? Excellently fit and proper is that alarm and item, *Psal.* ii. "Be wise therefore O ye Kings" (especially those ten horns, *Rev.* xvii.) who under pretence of fighting for Christ Jesus give their power to the beast against him, "and be warned ye judges of the earth. . . . Kiss the Son," that is with subjection and affection; acknowledge him only the king and judge of souls—in that power bequeathed to his ministers and churches—lest if "his wrath be kindled," yea, but a little, then "blessed are they that trust in him."

1643-1644 1644

ANNE BRADSTREET

Born in Northampton, England, 1612, died in Massachusetts, 1672. She was a gentlewoman by birth, her father being Thomas Dudley, steward of the Earl of Lincoln, and afterwards governor of Massachusetts. At the age of sixteen she married Simon Bradstreet, A. B. Emanuel College, Cambridge, who was after her death governor of Massachusetts. She came with her husband to the colony in company with Winthrop in 1630, and finally settled at Andover. In the midst of her domestic duties as mother of eight children she wrote her poems, which first appeared in London, 1650. A second edition was published in Boston, 1678. Among her descendents were Channing, the two Richard H. Danas, Wendell Phillips, and Oliver Wendell Holmes. These selections are full of the frigid conventionality that in her time, even in the old world, passed for imagination and took the place of real poetic emotion.

From THE FOUR SEASONS OF THE YEAR

SPRING

Another four I've left yet to bring on,
Of four times four the last quaternion;[1]
The winter, summer, autumn, and the spring,
In season all these seasons I shall bring.
Sweet spring, like man in his minority,
At present claimed and had priority.
With smiling face, and garments somewhat green,
She trimmed her locks, which late had frosted been;
Nor hot nor cold she spake, but with a breath
Fit to revive the numbed earth from death.
"Three months," quoth she, "are 'lotted to my share—

---

[11] Before "his" supply "to."

[1] set of four; *The Four Seasons* is the fourth poem of a series, the first three being *The Four Elements, The Four Humors of Man*, and *The Four Ages of Man.*

March, April, May of all the rest most fair.
Tenth of the first, Sol into Aries[2] enters,
And bids defiance to all tedious winters,
Crosseth the line, and equals night and day;
Still adds to the last till after pleasant May;
And now makes glad the darkened northern wights
Who for some months have seen but starry lights.
Now goes the plowman to his merry toil
He might[3] unloose his winter-locked soil.
The seedsman, too, doth lavish out his grain
In hope the more he casts the more to gain.
The gardener now superfluous branches lops,
And poles erects for his young clambering hops;
Now digs, then sows his herbs, his flowers, and roots,
And carefully manures[4] his trees of fruits.
The Pleiades their influence[5] now give,
And all that seemed as dead afresh doth live:
The croaking frogs, whom nipping winter killed,
Like birds now chirp and hop about the field.
The nightingale,[6] the blackbird, and the thrush
Now tune their lays on sprays of every bush.
The wanton frisking kid and soft-fleeced lambs
Do jump and play before their feeding dams;
The tender tops of budding grass they crop;
They joy in what they have, but more in hope—
For though the frost hath lost his binding power,
Yet many a fleece of snow and stormy shower
Doth darken Sol's bright eye, makes us remember
The pinching northwest wind of cold December.
My second month is April, green and fair,
Of longer days, and a more temperate air.
The sun in Taurus[7] keeps his residence,
And with his warmer beams glanceth from thence.
This is the month whose fruitful showers produces
All set and sown[8] for all delights and uses.
The pear, the plum, and apple-tree now flourish;
The grass grows long the hungry beast to nourish.
The primrose pale and azure violet
Among the verdurous grass hath nature set,
That when the sun on's love—the earth—doth shine
These might as lace set out her garment fine.
The fearful bird his little house now builds
In trees and walls, in cities and in fields;
The outside strong, the inside warm and neat—
A natural artificer complete.
The clucking hen her chirping chickens leads;
With wings and beak defends them from the gleads.[9]
My next and last is fruitful pleasant May,
Wherein the earth is clad in rich array.
The sun now enters loving Gemini,[10]
And heats us with the glances of his eye;
Our thicker raiment makes us lay aside,
Lest by his fervor we be torrified.
All flowers the sun now with his beams discloses

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[2] The Ram, one of the zodiacal constellations. The sun enters Aries, the Ram, on the 21st of March, or the 10th of March, O. S. This is the vernal equinox, as explained in the next few lines.

[3] The first edition has *for to unloose.*

[4] The word is probably to be taken as generally in Shakspere in its primitive sense of cultivate, till. From OF. *manoevrer,* manage, handle, work.

[5] The meaning is probably astrological rather than general. Power, benign or hurtful, flowed from the stars when these were in the ascendant. Hence, "to be born under a lucky star." The Pleiades, in Taurus, were supposed to exert a "sweet" influence. See *Job* xxxviii. 31. Mrs. Bradstreet inadvertently places the Pleiades in Aries.

[6] Of course Mrs. Bradstreet heard no nightingale in America, but perhaps she is to be excused from the charge of insincerity because the whole fauna and flora of nature poetry had been conventionalized, and because her Puritanism shut her away from the most vital Elizabethan poetic models.

[7] The constellation Taurus, the bull.

[8] All things set (planted) and sown. Mrs. Bradstreet's need for rime interferes with her syntax, as has happened with some more famous poets. See note on Byron, *Twelve Centuries of English Poetry and Prose,* p. 463.

[9] kites (used, probably, for hawks)

[10] The third sign of the Zodiac, named from the constellation Gemini, which it contains. Loving, because Castor and Pollux, the Gemini, (twins) were celebrated for their devotion to each other.

Except the double pinks and matchless roses.
Now swarms the busy, witty[11] honey-bee,
Whose praise deserves a page from more than me.
The cleanly housewife's dairy's now in the prime,
Her shelves and firkins filled for winter-time.
The meads with cowslips, honeysuckles, dight,[12]
One hangs his head, the other stands upright;
But both rejoice at th' heaven's clear smiling face,
More at her showers, which water them a space.
For fruits my season yields the early cherry,
The hasty peas, and wholesome cool strawberry.[13]
More solid fruits require a longer time;
Each season hath his fruit, so hath each clime—
Each man his own peculiar excellence,
But none in all that hath preëminence.

Sweet fragrant spring, with thy short pittance fly.
Let some describe thee better than can I.
Yet above all this privilege is thine,
Thy days still lengthen without least decline.

1650

"AS WEARY PILGRIM"

As weary pilgrim, now at rest,
Hugs with delight his silent nest,
His wasted limbs now lie full soft
That miry steps have trodden oft;
Blesses himself to think upon
His dangers past and travails done,
The burning sun no more shall heat,
Nor stormy rains on him shall beat;
The briars and thorns no more shall scratch,
Nor hungry wolves at him shall catch;
He erring[14] paths no more shall tread,
Nor wild fruits eat, instead of bread;
For waters cold he doth not long,
For thirst no more shall parch his tongue;
No rugged stones his feet shall gall,
Nor stumps nor rocks cause him to fall;
All cares and fears he bids farewell,
And means in safety now to dwell—
A pilgrim I on earth, perplexed
With sins, with cares and sorrows vexed,
By age and pains brought to decay,
And my clay house moldering away,
Oh, how I long to be at rest,
And soar on high among the blest!
This body shall in silence sleep,
Mine eyes no more shall ever weep;
No fainting fits shall me assail,
Nor grinding pains my body frail,[15]
With cares and fears ne'er cumbered be,
Nor losses know, nor sorrows see.
What though my flesh shall there consume?
It is the bed Christ did perfume;
And when a few years shall be gone
This mortal shall be clothed upon.
A corrupt carcass down it lies,
A glorious body it shall rise,[16]
In weakness and dishonor sown,
In power 't is raised by Christ alone.
Then soul and body shall unite,
And of their maker have the sight;
Such lasting joys shall there behold
As ear ne'er heard nor tongue e'er told.
Lord, make me ready for that day!
Then come, dear bridegroom, come away.

August 31, 1669 1867

MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH

Born in England, 1631, died at Malden, Massachusetts, 1705. Coming as a child with his parents to New England, he graduated at Harvard, 1651, was tutor there, 1652-1654, was chosen pastor at Malden, 1657, and remained as such until his death. Ill health broke in upon his preaching and caused him to study and practice medicine, and from 1686 he carried on both medicine and the ministry. His published works are *The Day of Doom*, 1662; *God's Controversy with New England*, 1662, published, 1871; *Meat out of the Eater*, 1669. Ten editions of *The Day of Doom* have been published in America and two in England.

From THE DAY OF DOOM[1]

1

Still was the night, serene and bright,
when all men sleeping lay;
Calm was the season, and carnal reason
thought so 't would last for aye.

---

[11] wise, discerning
[12] decked
[13] The entire flatness of such lines and couplets as these admits no defense.
[14] wandering
[15] wear out
[16] 2 *Corinthians* v. 2-4; 1 *Corinthians* xv. 42, 43.

[1] *The Day of Doom* expressed the doctrinal belief of all New England. As Professor Tyler says, the "shrill reverberating clatter, that would instantly catch and please the popular ear, at that time deaf to daintier and more

"Soul, take thine ease,[2] let sorrow cease,
much good thou hast in store:"
This was their song, their cups among,
the evening before.

2

Wallowing in all kinds of sin,
vile wretches lay secure:
The best of men had scarcely then
their lamps kept in good ure.
Virgins unwise,[3] who through disguise
amongst the best were numbered,
Had closed their eyes; yea and the wise
through sloth and frailty slumbered;

3

Like as of gold,[4] when men grew bold
God's threatenings to contemn,
Who stopped their ear, and would not hear,
when mercy warned them:
But took their course, without remorse,
till God began to pour
Destruction the world upon
in a tempestuous shower;

4

They put away the evil day,
and drowned their cares and fears,
Till drowned were they, and swept away
by vengeance unawares;
So at the last, whilst men sleep fast
in their security,
Surprised they are in such a snare
as cometh suddenly.

5

For at midnight break[5] forth a light,
which turned the night to day,
And speedily an hideous cry
did all the world dismay.
Sinners awake, their hearts do ache,
trembling their loins surpriseth;
Amazed with fear, by what they hear,
each one of them ariseth.

6

They rush from beds with giddy heads,
and to their windows run,
Viewing this light, which shines more bright
than doth the noon-day sun.
Straightway appears (they see't with tears)
the Son of God most dread;
Who with his train comes on amain
to judge both quick and dead.

7

Before his face the heavens gave place,
and skies are rent asunder,
With mighty voice, and hideous noise,
more terrible than thunder.
His brightness damps heaven's glorious lamps
and makes them hide their heads;
As if afraid, and quite dismayed,
they quit their wonted steads.

8

Ye sons of men that durst contemn
the threatenings of God's word,
How cheer you now? your hearts, I trow;
are thrilled as with a sword.
Now atheist blind, whose brutish mind
a God could never see,
Dost thou perceive, dost now believe
that Christ thy judge shall be?

9

Stout courages, (whose hardiness
could death and hell outface)
Are you as bold now you behold
your Judge draw near apace?
They cry, "No, no! alas! and woe!
our courage all is gone:
Our hardiness (foolhardiness)
hath us undone, undone!"

10

No heart so bold, but now grows cold
and almost dead with fear:
No eye so dry, but now can cry,
and pour out many a tear.
Earth's potentates and powerful states,
captains and men of might
Are quite abashed, their courage dashed
at this most dreadful sight.

11

Mean men lament, great men do rent
their robes, and tear their hair:
They do not spare their flesh to tear
through horrible despair.
All kindreds wail: all hearts do fail:
horror the world doth fill

---

subtile effects in poetry," made it the best known American poem in the colonies. The poem remains a landmark of the poetic taste of the time and a vigorous and lucid if lurid statement of Puritan belief in some essential matters. Lowell says, "[*The Day of Doom*] was the solace of every fireside, the flicker of the pine knots by which it was conned perhaps adding a livelier relish to its premonitions of eternal combustion."

[2] *Luke* xii. 19. The poem is a tissue of Biblical allusions. Only those most necessary to the understanding of the poem are noted.

[3] *Matthew* xxv. 1.

[4] Gold is apparently a misprint for old. The line refers to the destruction of man at the time of the deluge. See *Genesis* vi. 7.

[5] brake

With weeping eyes, and loud outcries,
yet knows not how to kill.

12

Some hide themselves in caves and delves,[6]
in places underground:
Some rashly leap into the deep,
to scape by being drowned:
Some to the rocks (O senseless blocks!)
and woody mountains run,
That there they might this fearful fight,
and dreaded presence shun.

13

In vain do they to mountains say,[7]
"Fall on us and us hide
From Judge's ire, more hot than fire,
for who may it abide?
No hiding place can from his face,
sinners at all conceal,
Whose flaming eye hid things doth spy,
and darkest things reveal."

14

The Judge draws nigh, exalted high
upon a lofty throne,
Amidst the throng of angels strong,
lo, Israel's Holy One!
The excellence of whose presence
and awful majesty,
Amazeth nature, and every creature,
doth more than terrify.

15

The mountains smoke, the hills are shook,
the earth is rent and torn,
As if she should be clear dissolved,
or from the center born.[8]
The sea doth roar, forsakes the shore,
and shrinks away for fear:
The wild beasts flee into the sea,
so soon as he draws near,

16

Whose glory bright, whose wondrous might
whose power imperial,
So far surpass whatever was
in realms terrestrial:
That tongues of men (nor angel's pen)
cannot the same express,
And therefore I must pass it by,
lest speaking should transgress.

17

Before his throne a trump is blown,
proclaiming the day of doom:
Forthwith he cries, "Ye dead arise,
and unto judgment come."
No sooner said, but 'tis obeyed;
sepulchers opened are:
Dead bodies all rise at his call,
and 's[9] mighty power declare.

18

Both sea and land, at his command,
their dead at once surrender:
The fire and air constrained are
also their dead to tender.
The mighty word of this great Lord
links body and soul together
Both of the just, and the unjust,
to part no more forever.

19

The same translates, from mortal states
to immortality,
All that survive, and be alive,
i' th' twinkling of an eye:
That so they may abide for aye
to endless weal or woe;
Both the renate[10] and reprobate
are made to die no more.

20

His winged hosts fly through all coasts,
together gathering
Both good and bad, both quick and dead
and all to judgment bring.
Out of their holes those creeping moles,
that hid themselves for fear,
By force they take, and quickly make
before the Judge appear.

21

Thus every one before the throne
of Christ the judge is brought,
Both righteous and impious
that good or ill hath wrought.
A separation, and differing station
by Christ appointed is
(To sinners sad) 'twixt good and bad,
'twixt heirs of woe and bliss.

22

At Christ's right hand the sheep do stand
his holy martyrs, who
For his dear name suffering shame,
calamity and woe

---

[6] caves
[7] *Luke* xxiii. 30.
[8] borne from the center (According to the old Ptolemaic astronomy the center of the earth is the center of the universe, the one immovable point in all creation. To move fixed objects in their relation to this center means total destruction.)
[9] and his
[10] Those born again, the elect.

Like champions stood, and with their blood
their testimony sealed;
Whose innocence without offence,
to Christ their Judge appealed.

. . . .

27

At Christ's left hand, the goats do stand,
all whining hypocrites,
Who for self-ends did seem Christ's friends,
but fostered guileful sprites:
Who sheep resembled, but they dissembled
(their hearts were not sincere)
Who once did throng Christ's lambs among
but now must not come near.

. . . .

38

All silence keep both goats and sheep
before the Judge's throne:
With mild aspect to his elect
then spake the holy one;
"My sheep draw near, your sentence hear,
which is to you no dread,
Who clearly now discern and know,
your sins are pardoned.

39

"'Twas meet that ye should judged be,
that so the world may spy
No cause of grudge, whenas I judge
and deal impartially.
Know therefore all both great and small,
the ground and reason why
These men do stand at my right hand,
and look so cheerfully."[11]

. . . .

166

Then to the bar all they drew near
who died in infancy,
And never had or good or bad
effected pers'nally;
But from the womb unto the tomb
were straightway carried,
(Or at the least ere they transgressed)
who thus began to plead:

167

"If for our own transgression,
or disobedience,
We here did stand at thy left hand,
just were the recompense;
But Adam's guilt our souls hath spilt,[12]
his fault is charged upon us;
And that alone hath overthrown
and utterly undone us.

168

"Not we, but he ate of the tree,
whose fruit was interdicted;
Yet on us all of his sad fall
the punishment's inflicted.
How could we sin that had not been,
or how is his sin our,
Without consent, which to prevent
we never had the power?

169

"O great Creator why was our nature
depraved and forlorn?
Why so defiled, and made so viled,
whilst we were yet unborn?
If it be just, and needs we must
transgressors reckoned be,
Thy mercy, Lord, to us afford,
which sinners hath set free.

170

"Behold we see Adam set free,
and saved from his trespass,
Whose sinful fall hath spilt us all,
and brought us to this pass.
Canst thou deny us once to try,
or grace to us to tender,
When he finds grace before thy face
who was the chief offender?"

171

Then answered the Judge most dread:
"God doth such doom forbid,
That men should die eternally
for what they never did.
But what you call old Adam's fall,
and only his trespass,
You call amiss to call it his,
both his and yours it was.

172

"He was designed of all mankind
to be a public head;
A common root, whence all should shoot
and stood in all their stead.
He stood and fell, did ill or well,
not for himself alone,
But for you all, who now his fall
and trespass would disown.

173

"If he had stood, then all his brood
had been established

---

[11] The stanzas omitted here recount the vain excuses of the heathen and of various classes of enlightened sinners.

[12] ruined

In God's true love never to move,
  nor once awry to tread;
Then all his race my Father's grace
  should have enjoyed forever,
And wicked sprites[13] by subtile sleights
  could them have harmed never.

174

"Would you have grieved to have received
  through Adam so much good,
As had been your for evermore,
  if he at first had stood?
Would you have said, 'We ne'er obeyed
  nor did thy laws regard;
It ill befits with benefits,
  us, Lord, to so reward?'

175

"Since then to share in his welfare,
  you could have been content,
You may with reason share in his treason,
  and in the punishment.
Hence you were born in state forlorn,
  with natures so depraved;
Death was your due because that you
  had thus yourselves behaved.

176

"You think, 'If we had been as he,
  whom God did so betrust,
We to our cost would ne'er have lost
  all for a paltry lust.'
Had you been made in Adam's stead,
  you would like things have wrought,
And so into the self-same woe,
  yourselves and yours have brought.

177

"I may deny you once to try,
  or grace to you to tender,
Though he finds grace before my face
  who was the chief offender;
Else should my grace cease to be grace,
  for it would not be free,
If to release whom I should please
  I have no liberty.

178

"If upon one what's due to none
  I frankly shall bestow,
And on the rest shall not think best
  compassion's skirts to throw,
Whom injure I? Will you envy
  and grudge at others' weal?
Or me accuse, who do refuse
  yourselves to help and heal?

179

"Am I alone of what's my own,
  no master or no lord?
And if I am, how can you claim
  what I to some afford?
Will you demand grace at my hand,
  and challenge what is mine?
Will you teach me whom to set free,
  and thus my grace confine?

180

"You sinners are, and such a share
  as sinners, may expect;
Such you shall have, for I do save
  none but mine own elect.
Yet to compare your sin with thei
  who lived a longer time,
I do confess yours is much less,
  though every sin's a crime.

181

"A crime it is, therefore in bliss
  you may not hope to dwell;
But unto you I shall allow
  the easiest room in hell."
The glorious King thus answering,
  they cease, and plead no longer;
Their consciences must needs confess
  his reasons are the stronger.

182

Thus all men's pleas the Judge with ease
  doth answer and confute,
Until that all, both great and small,
  are silenced and mute.
Vain hopes are cropped, all mouths ar
      stopped,
  sinners have nought to say,
But that 'tis just and equal most
  they should be damned for aye.

. . . .

189

O dismal day! whither shall they
  for help and succor flee?
To God above with hopes to move
  their greatest enemy?
His wrath is great, whose burning heat
  no floods of tears can slake;
His word stands fast that they be cast
  into the burning lake.

. . . .

195

Unto the saints with sad complaints
  should they themselves apply?
They're not dejected nor aught affected
  with all their misery.

---

[13] spirits (often thus in Elizabethan literature)

Friends stand aloof and make no proof
  what prayers or tears can do;
Your godly friends are now more friends
  to Christ than unto you.

196

Where tender love men's hearts did move
  unto a sympathy,
And bearing part of others' smart
  in their anxiety,
Now such compassion is out of fashion,
  and wholly laid aside;
No friends so near, but saints to hear
  their sentence can abide.

197

One natural brother beholds another
  in his astonied fit,[14]
Yet sorrows not thereat a jot,
  nor pities him a whit.
The godly wife conceives no grief,
  nor can she shed a tear
For the sad state of her dear mate,
  when she his doom doth hear.

198

He that was erst a husband pierced
  with sense of wife's distress,
Whose tender heart did bear a part
  of all her grievances,
Shall mourn no more as heretofore,
  because of her ill plight,
Although he see her now to be
  a damned forsaken wight.

199

The tender mother will own no other
  of all her num'rous brood,
But such as stand at Christ's right hand,
  acquitted through his blood.
The pious father had now much rather
  his graceless son should lie
In hell with devils, for all his evils,
  burning eternally,

200

Then God most high should injury
  by sparing him sustain;
And doth rejoice to hear Christ's voice,
  adjudging him to pain.
Thus having all, both great and small,
  convinced and silenced,
Christ did proceed their doom to read,
  and thus it uttered:

201

"Ye sinful wights and cursed sprites,
  that work iniquity,
Depart together from me forever
  to endless misery;
Your portion take in yonder lake,
  where fire and brimstone flameth;
Suffer the smart which your desert.[15]
  as its due wages claimeth."

202

Oh piercing words, more sharp than swords!
  What! to depart from Thee,
Whose face before for evermore
  the best of pleasures be!
What! to depart (unto our smart),
  from thee *eternally!*
To be for aye banished away
  with devils' company!

203

What! to be sent to punishment,
  and flames of burning fire!
To be surrounded, and eke confounded
  with God's revengeful ire!
What! to abide, not for a tide,
  these torments, but forever!
To be released, or to be eased,
  not after years, but never!

204

Oh fearful doom! now there's no room
  for hope or help at all;
Sentence is past which aye shall last;
  Christ will not it recall.
Then might you hear them rend and tear
  the air with their outcries;
The hideous noise of their sad voice
  ascendeth to the skies.

205

They wring their hands, their caitiff-hands,
  and gnash their teeth for terror;
They cry, they roar for anguish sore,
  and gnaw their tongues for horror.
But get away without delay,
  Christ pities not your cry;
Depart to Hell, there you may yell,
  and roar eternally.

. . . .

1662 1662

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[14] dazed condition

[15] The rime was accurate then.

BENJAMIN CHURCH

Born in England, 1639, died in Little Compton, Rhode Island, 1717. After settling at Duxbury, Massachusetts, Church was tempted by the fertile lands of Rhode Island and removed to Little Compton, where in the year of the outbreak of King Philip's War, 1675, he became the first white inhabitant. In the struggle which was entered into by the three colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut, and Plymouth, Church showed himself brave to the point of rashness, resourceful, and a natural leader of men. After recovering from severe wounds, he was placed in command of the Plymouth troops by whom Philip was killed. He was made colonel of militia, but was never fully rewarded for his services.

From ENTERTAINING PASSAGES RELATING TO PHILIP'S WAR, *which began in the month of June, 1675,—as also of* EXPEDITIONS *more lately made, ... , with some account of the Divine Providence toward Benjamin Church, Esq., by T. C.*[1]

. . . .

Their next motion[2] was towards the place where the prisoners told them that they had left their women and children, and surprised them all and some others that were newly come to them. And upon examination they held to one story, that it was hard to tell where to find Annawon, for he never roosted twice in a place.

Now a certain Indian soldier that Captain Church had gained over to be on his side prayed that he might have liberty to go and fetch in his father, who, he said, was about four miles from that place, in a swamp, with no other than one young squaw. Captain Church inclined to go with him, thinking it might be in his way to gain some intelligence of Annawon; and so, taking one Englishman and a few Indians with him, leaving the rest there, he went with his new soldier to look [after] his father.

When he came to the swamp, he bid the Indian go see if he could find his father. He was no sooner gone but Captain Church discovered a track coming down out of the woods; upon which he and his little company lay close, some on one side of the track, and some on the other. They heard the Indian soldier make a howling for his father and at length somebody answered him; but while they were listening, they thought they heard somebody coming towards them; presently they saw an old man coming up with a gun on his shoulder, and a young woman following of him in the track which they lay by. They let them come up between them, and then started up and laid hold on them both. Captain Church immediately examined them apart, telling them what they must trust to if they told false stories. He asked the young woman what company they came last from. She said, "From Captain Annawon's." He asked her how many were in company with him when she left him. She said, "Fifty or sixty." He asked her how many miles it was to the place where she left him. She said she did not understand miles, but he was up in Squannaconk[3] swamp.

The old man, who had been one of Philip's council, upon examination gave exactly the same account. Captain Church asked him if they could get there that night. He said if they went presently and traveled stoutly, they might get there by sunset. He asked whither he was going. He answered that Annawon had sent him down to look for some Indians that were gone down into Mount Hope Neck[4] to kill provisions. Captain Church let him know that those Indians were all his prisoners.

By this time came the Indian soldier and brought his father and one Indian more. The Captain was now in great strait of mind what to do next; [he] had a mind to give Annawon a visit, now he knew where to find him. But his company was very small, but half a dozen men beside himself, and [he] was under a necessity to send somebody back to acquaint his lieutenant and company with his proceedings. However, he asked his small company that were with him whether they would willingly go with him and give Annawon a visit. They told him they were always ready to obey his commands, etc.; but withal told him that they knew this Captain Annawon was a great soldier; that he had been a valiant captain under Asuhmequin,[5] Philip's father; and that he had been Philip's chieftain all this war; a very subtle man, and of great resolution, and had often said that he would never be taken alive by the English. And moreover they knew that the men that were with him were resolute fellows, some of Philip's chief soldiers; and therefore feared whether it was practicable to make an attempt upon him with so small a handful of assistants as now were with him. Told him further that it would be a pity that, after all the great things he had done, he should throw away his life at last, etc. Upon which he replied that he doubted not Annawon was a subtle and valiant man; that he had a long time, but in vain, sought for him, and never till now could find his quarters, and he was very loath to miss of the opportunity; and doubt not but that, if they would cheerfully go with him, the same almighty Providence that had hitherto protected and befriended them would do so still, etc.

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[1] The History was compiled by Thomas Church, son of Benjamin, from full memoranda written by the father, in 1716. The present selection is from the 1865 edition of this work, edited by Henry Martyn Dexter.

[2] After the death of Philip, a chief, Annawon, remained in arms at the head of a considerable band. It will be seen that Church, who had adopted Indian methods of warfare and was out scouting, away from his main force, led his few men, almost all Indians, and some of them only recently captured from the hostile tribe, into the Indian stronghold in the swamp and captured the chief. In the qualities of the frontier soldier that he here shows, Church was followed by a long line of settlers in arms who pushed toward the West for two hundred years.

[3] In the southeasterly part of the town of Rehoboth, Bristol County, Massachusetts.

[4] Philip had just been killed here.

Upon this with one consent they said they would go. Captain Church then turned to one Cook of Plymouth (the only Englishman then with him), and asked him what he thought of it. Who replied, "Sir, I am never afraid of going anywhere when you are with me." Then Captain Church asked the old Indian if he could carry his horse with him,—for he conveyed a horse thus far with him. He replied that it was impossible for an horse to pass the swamps. Therefore he sent away his new Indian soldier with his father and the Captain's horse to his lieutenant, and orders for him to move to Taunton with the prisoners, to secure them there, and to come out in the morning in the Rehoboth road in which he might expect to meet him, if he were alive and had success.

The Captain then asked the old fellow if he would pilot him unto Annawon. He answered that he having given him his life, he was obliged to serve him. He bid him move on then, and they followed. The old man would out-travel them so far, sometimes, that they were almost out of sight; looking over his shoulder and seeing them behind he would halt.

Just as the sun was setting, the old man made a full stop and sat down; the company coming up also sat down, being all weary. Captain Church asked, "What news?" He answered, that about that time in the evening, Captain Annawon sent out his scouts to see if the coast were clear, and as soon as it began to grow dark, the scouts return, and then, said he, "we may move again securely." When it began to grow dark, the old man stood up again, and Captain Church asked him if he would take a gun and fight for him. He bowed very low, and prayed him not to impose such a thing upon him as to fight against Captain Annawon, his old friend. "But," says he, "I will go along with you, and be helpful to you, and will lay hands on any man that shall offer to hurt you."

It being now pretty dark, they moved close together;—anon they heard a noise. The Captain stayed the old man with his hand, and asked his own men what noise they thought it might be. They concluded it to be the pounding of a mortar. The old man had given Captain Church a description of the place where Annawon now lay, and of the difficulty of getting at him. Being sensible that they were pretty near them, with two of his Indians he creeps to the edge of the rocks, from whence he could see their camps. He saw three companies of Indians at a little distance from each other; being easy to be discovered by the light of their fires. He saw also the great Annawon and his company, who had formed his camp or kenneling-place by falling a tree under the side of the great clefts of rocks and setting a row of birch bushes up against it; where he himself, and his son, and some of his chiefs had taken up their lodging, and made great fires without them, and had their pots and kettles boiling, and spits roasting. Their arms also he discovered, all set together in a place fitted for the purpose, standing up an-end against a stick lodged in two crotches, and a mat placed over them to keep them from the wet or dew. The old Annawon's feet and his son's head were so near the arms as almost to touch them.

But the rocks were so steep that it was impossible to get down, but as they lowered themselves by the boughs and the bushes that grew in the cracks of the rock. Captain Church creeping back again to the old man asked him if there was no possibility of getting at them some other way. He answered, "No." That he and all that belonged to Annawon, were ordered to come that way, and none could come any other way without difficulty, or danger of being shot.

Captain Church then ordered the old man and his daughter to go down foremost with their baskets at their backs, that when Annawon saw them with their baskets he should not mistrust the intrigue. Captain Church and his handful of soldiers crept down also, under the shadow of these two and their baskets, and the Captain himself crept close behind the old man, with his hatchet in his hand, and stepped over the young man's head to the arms. The young Annawon discovering of him, whipped his blanket over his head and shrunk up in a heap. The old Captain Annawon started up on his breech and cried out "Howoh." And despairing of escape, threw himself back again, and lay silent until Captain Church had secured all the arms, etc. And having secured that company, he sent his Indian soldiers to the other fires and companies, giving them instructions what to do and say. Accordingly they went into the midst of them. When they discovered themselves who they were, [they] told them that their Captain Annawon was taken, and it would be best for them quietly and peaceably to surrender themselves, which would procure good quarter for them; otherwise, if they should pretend to resist or make their escape, it would be in vain, and they could expect no other but that Captain Church, with his great army, who had now entrapped them, would cut them to pieces. Told them also if they would submit themselves, and deliver up all their arms unto them, and keep every man his place until it was day, they would assure them that their Captain Church, who had been so kind to themselves when they surrendered to him, should be as kind to them. Now they being old acquaintance, and many of them relations, did much the readier give heed to what they said, and complied, and surrendered up their arms unto them, both their guns and hatchets, etc., and were forthwith carried to Captain Church.

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[5] Better known as Massasoit, friend of the Pilgrims.

Things being so far settled, Captain Church asked Annawon, what he had for supper, "for," said he, "I am come to sup with you." *"Taubut,"* said Annawon with a big voice, and looking about upon his women bid them hasten and get Captain Church and his company some supper; then turned to Captain Church and asked him whether he would eat cow beef or horse beef. The Captain told him cow beef would be most acceptable. It was soon got ready, and pulling his little bag of salt out of his pocket, which was all the provision he brought with him, this seasoned his cow beef. So that with it and the dried green corn, which the old squaw was pounding in the mortar while they were sliding down the rocks, he made a very hearty supper. And this pounding in the mortar proved lucky for Captain Church's getting down the rocks; for when the old squaw pounded they moved, and when she ceased to turn the corn they ceased creeping. The noise of the mortar prevented the enemy's hearing their creeping, and the corn, being now dressed, supplied the want of bread and gave a fine relish with the cow beef.

Supper being over, Captain Church sent two of his men to inform the other companies that he had killed Philip, and had taken their friends in Mount Hope Neck, but had spared their lives, and that he had subdued now all the enemy, he supposed, excepting this company of Annawon's; and now if they would be orderly and keep their places until morning, they should have good quarter, and that he would carry them to Taunton, where they might see their friends again, etc.

The messengers returned that the Indians yielded to his proposals.

Captain Church thought it was now time for him to take a nap, having had no sleep in two days and one night before; told his men that if they would let him sleep two hours, they should sleep all the rest of the night. He laid himself down and endeavored to sleep, but all disposition to sleep departed from him.

After he had lain a little while, he looked up to see how his watch managed, but found them all fast asleep. Now Captain Church had told Captain Annawon's company, as he had ordered his Indians to tell the others, that their lives should all be spared, excepting Captain Annawon's, and it was not in his power to promise him his life, but he must carry him to his masters at Plymouth, and he would entreat them for his life.

Now when Captain Church found not only his own men, but all the Indians fast asleep, Annawon only excepted, who, he perceived, was as broad awake as himself; and so they lay looking one upon the other, perhaps an hour. Captain Church said nothing to him, for he could not speak Indian, and thought Annawon could not speak English.

At length Annawon raised himself up, cast off his blanket, and with no more clothes than his small breeches, walked a little way back from the company. Captain Church thought no other but that he had walked a little distance for some necessary errand, and would very soon return.

But by and by he was gone out of sight and hearing, and then Captain Church began to suspect some ill design in him; and got all the guns close to him, and crowded himself close under young Annawon; that if he should anywhere get a gun, he should not make a shot at him, without endangering his son. Lying very still awhile waiting for the event, at length he heard somebody coming the same way that Annawon went. The moon now shining bright, he saw him at a distance coming with something in his hands, and coming up to Captain Church he fell upon his knees before him, and offered him what he had brought, and speaking in plain English said, "Great Captain, you have killed Philip, and conquered his country; for I believe that I and my company are the last that war against the English, so suppose the war is ended by your means; and therefore these things belong unto you." Then opening his pack, he pulled out Philip's belt, curiously wrought with wampum, being nine inches broad, wrought with black and white wampum in various figures, and flowers and pictures of many birds and beasts. This, when hung upon Captain Church's shoulders, it reached his ankles; and another belt of wampum he presented him with, wrought after the former manner, which Philip was wont to put upon his head. It had two flags on the back part, which hung down on his back, and another small belt with a star upon the end of it, which he used to hang on his breast, and they were all edged with red hair, which Annawon said they got in the Mohogs'[6] country. Then he pulled out two horns of glazed powder, and a red cloth blanket. He told Captain Church these were Philip's royalties[7] which he was wont to adorn himself with when he sat in state; that he thought himself happy that he had an opportunity to present them to Captain Church, who had won them, etc.[8] Spent the remainder of the night in discourse; and Captain Annawon gave an account of what mighty success he had formerly in wars against many nations of Indians, when [he] served Asuhmequin, Philip's father, etc.

In the morning, as soon as it was light, the Captain marched with his prisoners out of that swampy country towards Taunton, met his lieutenant and company about four miles out of town, who expressed a great deal of joy to see him again, and said 't was more than ever he expected. They went into Taunton, were civilly and kindly treated by the inhabitants, refreshed and rested themselves that night.

Early next morning, the Captain took old Annawon and half a dozen of his Indian soldiers, and his own man, and went to Rhode Island; sending the rest of his company, and his prisoners, by his lieutenant to Plymouth. Tarrying two or three days upon the island, he then went to Plymouth, and carried his wife and his two children with him.

. . . .

Probably *1716* 1716

COTTON MATHER

Born at Boston, 1663, died there, 1728. He was grandson of Richard Mather and son of Increase Mather, leading clergymen of the colony. Precocious as a boy, he was made A. B. of Harvard, 1678, A. M., 1681, and assistant pastor to his father, 1680. A few years later he was in full control of the North Church, his father having been chosen president of Harvard College. Cotton Mather was the intellectual and spiritual leader of New England during his time. He wrote *Memorable Providences Relating to Witchcraft,* 1689; *Wonders of the Invisible World,* 1693; *Magnalia Christi Americana,* 1702; *Essays to do Good,* 1710. His actual publications, mostly sermons and religious essays, amount to some four hundred titles.

From MAGNALIA CHRISTI AMERICANA[1]

[*Sir William Phips*]

. . . .

. . . For my reader now being satisfied that

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[6] Mohawks'

[7] kingly trappings

[8] Church appreciated the force of this pathetic incident. Throughout the war he showed himself compassionate and honest with the Indians, and it was wholly against his wishes and expectations that the Plymouth authorities put Annawon to death.

[1] The *Magnalia Christi Americana* (Mighty Works of Christ in America) *or Ecclesiastical History of New England* is the most important literary monument of the colonial seventeenth century. It is written without restraint, is often untrustworthy as to fact, and combines church and political history with biography, anecdote and legend. The style, consciously adopted by Mather and defended by him, illustrates in its involved sentence structure, display of learning, and conceits, some of the worst features of the pedantic prose fashionable in England two generations before Mather's time. Of this style, the puns, for example, are characteristic. They are not made with necessarily humorous intent, but for the purpose of extracting from the idea all its suggestiveness, and to show the writer's skill in dressing out a thought in new array.

One division of the *Magnalia* comprises the lives of men "that have been Shields unto the churches of New England." The appendix to this division, which is here given in part, is a person's being obscure in his original[2] is not always a just prejudice to an expectation of considerable matters from him, I shall now inform him that this our Phips was born February 2, A. D. 1650, at a despicable plantation[3] on the river of Kennebec, and almost the furthest village of the eastern settlement of New England. And as the father of that man[4] which was as great a blessing as England had in the age of that man was a smith, so a gun-smith—namely, James Phips, once of Bristol—had the honor of being the father to him whom we shall presently see made by the God of Heaven as great a blessing to New England as that country could have had, if they themselves had pleased. His fruitful mother, yet living, had no less than twenty-six children, whereof twenty-one were sons; but equivalent to them all was William, one of the youngest, whom his father, dying, left young with his mother, and with her he lived, "keeping of sheep in the wilderness,"[5] until he was eighteen years old; at which time he began to feel some further dispositions of mind from that providence of God which "took him from the sheepfolds, from following the ewes great with young, and brought him to feed his people."[6] Reader, inquire no further who was his father. Thou shalt anon see that he was, as the Italians express it, "a son to his own labors!"

His friends earnestly solicited him to settle among them in a plantation of the east; but he had an unaccountable impulse upon his mind, persuading him, as he would privately hint unto some of them, 'that he was born to greater matters.' To come at those 'greater matters' his first contrivance was to bind himself an apprentice unto a ship carpenter for four years; in which time he became a master of the trade that once, in a vessel of more than forty thousand tons, repaired the ruins of the earth: Noah's, I mean; he then betook himself an hundred and fifty miles further afield, even to Boston, the chief town of New England; which being a place of the most business and resort in those parts of the world, he expected there more commodiously to pursue the *Spes majorum et meliorum*[7]—hopes which had inspired him. At Boston, where it was that he now learned first of all to read and write, he followed his trade for about a year; and, by a laudable deportment, so recommended himself, that he married a young gentlewoman[8] of good repute, who was the widow of one Mr. John Hull, a well-bred merchant, but the daughter of one Captain Roger Spencer, a person of good fashion, who, having suffered much damage in his estate, by some unkind and unjust actions, which he bore with such patience, that for fear of thereby injuring the public, he would not seek satisfaction, posterity might afterward see the reward of his patience, in what Providence hath now done for one of his own posterity. Within a little while after his marriage, he indented[9] with several persons in Boston to build them a ship at Sheepscott River, two or three leagues eastward of Kennebec; where having launched the ship, he also provided a lading of lumber to bring with him, which would have been to the advantage of all concerned. But just as the ship was hardly finished, the barbarous Indians on that river broke forth into an open and cruel war upon the English; and the miserable people, surprised by so sudden a storm of blood, had no refuge from the infidels but the ship now finishing in the harbor. Whereupon he left his intended lading behind him, and, instead thereof, carried with him his old neighbors and their families, free of all charges to Boston; so the first action that he did, after he was his own man, was to save his father's house, with the rest of the neighborhood, from ruin; but the disappointment which befel him from the loss of his other lading, plunged his affairs into greater embarrassments with such as had employed him.

But he was hitherto no more than beginning to make scaffolds for further and higher actions! He would frequently tell the gentlewoman his wife that he should yet be captain of a King's ship;[10] that he should come to have the command of better men than he was now accounted himself; and that he should be owner of a fair brick-house in the Green-lane of North-Boston;[11]

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occupied with the life of "Sir William Phips late Governour of New England."

[2] To get under way, Mather has just cited a number of examples of men of obscure origin who have been commanding figures in the world.

[3] Small settlement or group of farms.

[4] Perhaps Bunyan, whose father is said to have been a tinker.

[5] 1 *Samuel* xvii. 28.

[6] *Psalms* lxxviii. 70, 71.

[7] Hope of greater and better things.

[8] Note here and elsewhere the consciousness of social rank in all the early New England writers.

[9] contracted

[10] A ship in the English navy.

[11] Now Salem Street. North Boston was just then coming to be the best residence quarter of the city.

and that, it may be, this would not be all that the providence of God would bring him to. She entertained these passages[12] with a sufficient incredulity; but he had so serious and positive an expectation of them, that it is not easy to say what was the original thereof. He was of an enterprising genius, and naturally disdained littleness; but his disposition for business was of the Dutch mold, where, with a little show of wit,[13] there is as much wisdom demonstrated, as can be shown by any nation. His talent lay not in the airs that serve chiefly for the pleasant and sudden turns of conversation; but he might say, as Themistocles,[14] 'Though he could not play upon a fiddle, yet he knew how to make a little city become a great one.' He would prudently contrive a weighty undertaking, and then patiently pursue it unto the end. He was of an inclination cutting rather like a hatchet than like a razor; he would propose very considerable matters to himself, and then so cut through them, that no difficulties could put by the edge of his resolutions. Being thus of the true temper for doing of great things, he betakes himself to the sea, the right scene for such things; and upon advice of a Spanish wreck about the Bahamas, he took a voyage thither; but with little more success than what just served him a little to furnish him for a voyage to England; whither he went in a vessel, not much unlike that which the Dutchmen stamped on their first coin, with these words about it: *Incertum quo Fata ferant*.[15] Having first informed himself that there was another Spanish wreck, wherein was lost a mighty treasure, hitherto undiscovered, he had a strong impression upon his mind that he must be the discoverer; and he made such representations of his design at Whitehall,[16] that by the year 1683 he became the captain of a King's ship, and arrived at New England commander of the *Algier Rose,* a frigate of eighteen guns and ninety-five men.

To relate all the dangers through which he passed, both by sea and land, and all the tiresome trials of his patience, as well as of his courage, while year after year the most vexing accidents imaginable delayed the success of his design, it would even tire the patience of the reader: for very great was the experiment that Captain Phips made of the Italian observation, "He that cannot suffer both good and evil, will never come to any great preferment." Wherefore I shall supersede all journal of his voyages to and fro, with reciting one instance of his conduct, that showed him to be a person of no contemptible capacity. While he was captain of the *Algier Rose,* his men growing weary of their unsuccessful enterprise, made a mutiny, wherein they approached him on the quarter-deck, with drawn swords in their hands, and required him to join with them in running away with the ship, to drive a trade of piracy on the South Seas. Captain Phips, though he had not so much of a weapon as an ox-goad, or a jaw-bone in his hands, yet, like another Shamgar or Samson,[17] with a most undaunted fortitude, he rushed in upon them, and with the blows of his bare hands, felled many of them, and quelled all the rest. But this is not the instance which I intended: that which I intend is, that (as it has been related unto me) one day while his frigate lay careening,[18] at a desolate Spanish island, by the side of a rock, from whence they had laid a bridge to the shore, the men, whereof he had about an hundred, went all but about eight or ten to divert themselves, as they pretended, in the woods; where they all entered into an agreement, which they signed in a ring,[19] that about seven o'clock that evening they would seize the captain, and those eight or ten which they knew to be true unto him, and leave them to perish on this island, and so be gone away unto the South Sea to seek their fortune. Will the reader now imagine that Captain Phips, having advice of this plot but about an hour and half before it was to be put in execution, yet within two hours brought all these rogues down upon their knees to beg for their lives? But so it was! for these knaves considering that they should want a carpenter with them in their villainous expedition, sent a messenger to fetch unto them the carpenter, who was then at work upon the vessel; and unto him they showed their articles; telling him what he must look for if he did not subscribe among them. The carpenter being an honest fellow, did with much importunity prevail for one half hour's time to consider of the matter; and returning to work upon the vessel, with a spy by them set upon him, he feigned himself taken with a fit of the colic, for the relief whereof he suddenly run unto the captain in the great cabin for a dram; where, when he came, his business was only, in brief, to tell the captain of the horrible distress which he was fallen into; but the captain bid him as briefly return to the rogues in the woods, and sign their articles, and leave him to provide for the rest. The carpenter was no sooner gone but Captain Phips, calling together the few friends (it may be seven or eight) that were left him aboard, whereof the gunner was one, demanded of them, whether they would stand by him in the extremity which he informed them was now come upon him; whereto they replied, 'They would stand by him, if he could save them'; and he answered, 'By the help of God he did not fear it.' All their provisions had been carried ashore to a tent, made for that purpose there; about which they had placed several great guns to defend it, in case of any assault from Spaniards, that might happen to come that way. Wherefore Captain Phips immediately ordered those guns to be silently drawn[20] and turned; and so pulling up the bridge, he charged his great guns aboard, and brought them to bear on every side of the tent. By this time the army of rebels comes out of the woods; but as they drew near to the tent of provisions, they saw such a change of circumstances, that they cried out, "We are betrayed!" And they were soon confirmed in it, when they heard the captain with a stern fury call to them, "Stand off, ye wretches, at your peril!" He quickly saw them cast into a more than ordinary confusion when they saw him ready to fire his great guns upon them, if they offered one step further than he permitted them: and when he had signified unto them his resolve to abandon them unto all the desolation which they had purposed for him, he caused the bridge to be again laid, and his men begun to take the provisions aboard. When the wretches beheld what was coming upon them, they fell to very humble entreaties; and at last fell down upon their knees, protesting that they never had anything against him, except only his unwillingness to go away with the King's ship upon the South-Sea design: but upon all other accounts, they would choose rather to live and die with him than with any man in the world: however, since they saw how much he was dissatisfied at it, they would insist upon it no more, and humbly begged his pardon. And when he judged that he had kept them on their knees long enough, he having first secured their arms, received them aboard; but he immediately weighed anchor and, arriving at Jamaica, he turned them off. Now, with a small company of other men he sailed from thence to Hispaniola,[21] where, by the policy of his address,[22] he fished out of a very old Spaniard (or Portuguese) a little advice about the true spot where lay the wreck which he had been hitherto seeking, as unprosperously as the chemists have their aurisick[23] stone: that it was upon a reef of shoals, a few leagues to the northward of Port de la Plata, upon Hispaniola, a port so called, it seems, from the landing of some of the shipwrecked company, with a boat full of plate,[24] saved out of their sinking frigate. Nevertheless, when he had searched very narrowly the spot whereof the old Spaniard had advised him, he had not hitherto exactly lit upon it. Such thorns did vex his affairs while he was in the *Rose* frigate; but none of all these things could retund[25] the edge of his expectations to find the wreck; with such expectations he returned then into England, that he might there better furnish himself to prosecute a new discovery; for though he judged he might, by proceeding a little further, have come at the right spot; yet he found his present company too ill a crew to be confided in.

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[12] listened to these speeches

[13] ingenuity, skill

[14] According to Plutarch, Themistocles was wont thus to reply to those who twitted him with ignorance of the social graces.

[15] Uncertain whither the fates will lead.

[16] The royal palace in London.

[17] Shamgar smote six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad, and Samson one thousand with the jawbone of an ass. See *Judges* iii. 31; xv. 15.

[18] Lying far over toward one side for repairs upon the other under the waterline.

[19] round-robin

So proper[26] was his behavior, that the best noblemen in the kingdom now admitted him into their conversation;[27] but yet he was opposed by powerful enemies, that clogged his affairs with such demurrages,[28] and such disappointments, as would have wholly discouraged his designs, if his patience had not been invincible. "He who can wait, hath what he desireth."[29] Thus his indefatigable patience, with a proportionable diligence, at length overcame the difficulties that had been thrown in his way;

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[20] i.e., the powder and shot removed

[21] Haiti, named by Columbus Española. Little Spain.

[22] sagacity and suavity of his manner

[23] Probably a misprint for *aurific* (gold-bearing), the *f* of Mather's manuscript having been mistaken for a long *s*. The reference is to the search of the alchemists for gold.

[24] valuables, generally utensils, of gold and silver

[25] dull

[26] agreeable

[27] intercourse

[28] delays

[29] Possibly an adaptation of such passages as *Proverbs* xxiii. 18; *Hebrews* vi. 15, etc.

and prevailing with the Duke of Albemarle, and some other persons of quality, to fit him out, he set sail for the fishing-ground, which had been so well baited half an hundred years before: and as he had already discovered his capacity for business in many considerable actions, he now added unto those discoveries, by not only providing all, but also by inventing many of the instruments necessary to the prosecution of his intended fishery. Captain Phips arriving with a ship and a tender at Port de la Plata, made a stout canoe of a stately cotton-tree, so large as to carry eight or ten oars, for the making of which piragua (as they call it) he did, with the same industry that he did everything else, employ his own hand and adz, and endure no little hardship, lying abroad in the woods many nights together. This piragua, with the tender, being anchored at a place convenient, the piragua kept busking to and again,[30] but could only discover a reef of rising shoals thereabouts, called "The Boilers,"—which, rising to be within two or three foot of the surface of the sea, were yet so steep, that a ship striking on them, would immediately sink down, who could say how many fathom? into the ocean. Here they could get no other pay for their long peeping among the boilers, but only such as caused them to think upon returning to their captain with the bad news of their total disappointment. Nevertheless, as they were upon the return, one of the men looking over the side of the piragua, into the calm water, he spied a sea feather, growing, as he judged, out of a rock; whereupon they bade one of their Indians to dive and fetch this feather, that they might, however, carry home something with them, and make, at least, as fair a triumph as Caligula's.[31] The diver bringing up the feather, brought therewithal a surprising story, that he perceived a number of great guns in the watery world where he had found his feather; the report of which great guns exceedingly astonished the whole company; and at once turned their despondencies for their ill success into assurances that they had now lit upon the true spot of ground which they had been looking for; and they were further confirmed in these assurances, when, upon further diving, the Indian fetched up a sow, as they styled it, or a lump of silver worth perhaps two or three hundred pounds. Upon this they prudently buoyed the place, that they might readily find it again; and they went back unto their captain, whom for some while they distressed with nothing but such bad news as they formerly thought they must have carried him: nevertheless, they so slipped in the sow of silver on one side under the table, where they were now sitting with the captain, and hearing him express his resolutions to wait still patiently upon the providence of God under these disappointments, that when he should look on one side, he might see that odd thing before him. At last he saw it; seeing it, he cried out with some agony, "Why! What is this? whence comes this?" And then, with changed countenances, they told him how and where they got it. "Then," said he, "thanks be to God! we are made;" and so away they went, all hands to work; wherein they had this one further piece of remarkable prosperity, that whereas if they had first fallen upon that part of the Spanish wreck where the pieces of eight[32] had been stowed in bags among the ballast, they had seen a more laborious, and less enriching time of it: now, most happily, they first fell upon that room in the wreck where the bullion had been stored up; and they so prospered in this new fishery, that in a little while they had, without the loss of any man's life, brought up thirty-two tons of silver; for it was now come to measuring of silver by tons. Besides which, one Adderly, of Providence, who had formerly been very helpful to Captain Phips in the search of this wreck, did, upon former agreement, meet him now with a little vessel here; and he, with his few hands, took up about six tons of silver; whereof, nevertheless, he made so little use, that in a year or two he died at Bermudas, and, as I have heard, he ran distracted some while before he died. Thus did there once again come into the light of the sun a treasure which had been half an hundred years groaning under the waters: and in this time there was grown upon the plate a crust like limestone, to the thickness of several inches; which crust being broken open by iron contrived for that purpose, they knocked out whole bushels of rusty pieces of eight which were grown thereinto. Besides that incredible treasure of plate in various forms, thus fetched up, from seven or eight fathom under water, there were vast riches of gold, and pearls and jewels, which they also lit upon; and, indeed, for a more comprehensive invoice, I must but summarily say, "All that a Spanish frigate uses to be enriched withal." Thus did they continue fishing till their provisions failing them, 'twas time to be gone; but before they went, Captain Phips caused Adderly and his folk to swear, that they would none of them discover[33] the place of the wreck, or come to the place any more till the next year, when he expected again to be there himself. And it was also remarkable, that though the sows came up still so fast, that on the very last day of their being there they took up twenty, yet it was afterwards found, that they had in a manner wholly cleared that room of the ship where those massy things were stowed.

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[30] scurrying to and fro

[31] Caligula, the mad Roman emperor, wishing to be honored by a military triumph, led an army to the Rhine. Finding no barbarians whom he might fight, he performed some theatrical military movements, and then marched to the sea where he bade his soldiers fill their helmets with shells as trophies of Neptune worthy to adorn the temples of Rome.

[32] Spanish coins of the value of eight reals, or one dollar.

But there was one extraordinary distress which Captain Phips now found himself plunged into: for his men were come out with him upon seamen's wages, at so much per month; and when they saw such vast litters of silver sows and pigs, as they called them, come on board them at the captain's call, they knew not how to bear it, that they should not share all among themselves, and be gone to lead "a short life and a merry," in a climate where the arrest of those that had hired them should not reach them. In this terrible distress he made his vows unto Almighty God, that if the Lord would carry him safe home to England with what he had now given him, "to suck of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sands,"[34] he would for ever devote himself unto the interests of the Lord Jesus Christ and of his people, especially in the country which he did himself originally belong unto. And he then used all the obliging arts imaginable to make his men true unto him, especially by assuring them that, besides their wages, they should have ample requitals made unto them; which if the rest of his employers would not agree unto, he would himself distribute his own share among them. Relying upon the word of one whom they had ever found worthy of their love, and of their trust, they declared themselves content; but still keeping a most careful eye upon them, he hastened back for England with as much money as he thought he could then safely trust his vessel withal; not counting it safe to supply himself with necessary provisions at any nearer port, and so return unto the wreck, by which delays he wisely feared lest all might be lost, more ways than one. Though he also left so much behind him, that many from divers parts made very considerable voyages of gleanings after his harvest; which came to pass by certain Bermudians compelling of Adderly's boy, whom they spirited away with them, to tell them the exact place where the wreck was to be found. Captain Phips now coming up to London in the year 1687, with near three hundred thousand pounds sterling aboard him, did acquit himself with such an exemplary honesty, that partly by his fulfilling his assurances to the seamen, and partly by his exact and punctual care to have his employers defrauded of nothing that might conscientiously belong unto them, he had less than sixteen thousand pounds left unto himself; as an acknowledgment of which honesty in him, the Duke of Albemarle made unto his wife, whom he never saw, a present of a golden cup, near a thousand pound in value. The character of an honest man he had so merited in the whole course of his life, and especially in this last act of it, that this, in conjunction with his other serviceable qualities, procured him the favors of the greatest persons in the nation; and "he that had been so diligent in his business, must now stand before kings, and not stand before mean men."[35] There were indeed certain mean men—if base, little, dirty tricks, will entitle men to meanness—who urged the King to seize his whole cargo, instead of the tenths,[36] upon his first arrival; on this pretence, that he had not been rightly informed of the true state of the case when he granted the patent, under the protection whereof these particular men had made themselves masters of all this mighty treasure; but the King replied, that he had been rightly informed by Captain Phips of the whole matter, as it now proved; and that it was the slanders of one then present which had, unto his damage, hindered him from hearkening to the information; wherefore he would give them, he said, no disturbance; they might keep what they had got; but Captain Phips, he saw, was a person of that honesty, fidelity and ability, that he should not want his countenance.[37] Accordingly the King, in consideration of the service done by him, in bringing such a treasure into the nation, conferred upon him the honor of knighthood; and if we now reckon him a knight of the golden fleece,[38] the style might pretend unto some circumstances that would justify it. Or call him, if you please, "the knight of honesty;" for it was honesty with industry that raised him; and he became a mighty river, without the running in of muddy water to make him so. Reader, now make a pause, and behold one raised by God![39]

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[33] disclose

[34] *Deuteronomy* xxxiii. 19.

[35] *Proverbs* xxii. 29.

[36] Perhaps the usual royal share in treasure thus found, or the royal share agreed upon in the special contract or patent in this case.

. . . .

[*Witchcraft*]

. . . .

Now, the arrival of Sir William Phips to the government of New England, was at a time when a governor would have had occasion for all the skill in[40] sorcery that was ever necessary to a Jewish counselor; a time when scores of poor people had newly fallen under a prodigious possession of devils, which it was then generally thought had been by witchcrafts introduced. It is to be confessed and bewailed, that many inhabitants of New England, and young people especially, had been led away with little sorceries, wherein they "did secretly those things that were not right against the Lord their God";[41] they would often cure hurts with spells, and practice detestable conjurations with sieves, and keys, and peas, and nails, and horse-shoes, and other implements, to learn the things for which they had a forbidden and impious curiosity. Wretched books had stolen into the land, wherein fools were instructed how to become able fortune-tellers: among which, I wonder that a blacker brand is not set upon that fortune-telling wheel, which that sham-scribbler that goes under the letters of R. B. has promised in his *Delights for the Ingenious,*[42] as an honest and pleasant recreation: and by these books, the minds of many had been so poisoned, that they studied this finer witchcraft; until 'tis well if some of them were not betrayed into what is grosser, and more sensible and capital. Although these diabolical divinations are more ordinarily committed perhaps all over the whole world, than they are in the country of New England, yet, that being a country devoted unto the worship and service of the Lord Jesus Christ above the rest of the world, He signalized his vengeance against these wickednesses, with such extraordinary dispensations as have not been often seen in other places.

The devils which had been so played withal,[43] and, it may be, by some few criminals more explicitly engaged and employed, now broke in upon the country, after as astonishing a manner as was ever heard of. Some scores of people, first about Salem, the center and first-born of all the towns in the colony, and afterwards in several other places, were arrested with many preternatural vexations[44] upon their bodies, and a variety of cruel torments, which were evidently inflicted from the demons of the invisible world. The people that were infected and infested with such demons, in a few days' time arrived unto such a refining alteration upon their eyes, that they could see their tormentors: they saw a devil of a little stature, and of a tawny color, attended still[45] with specters that appeared in more humane circumstances.[46]

These tormentors tendered unto the afflicted a book, requiring them to sign it, or to touch it at least, in token of their consenting to be listed in the service of the devil; which they refusing to do, the specters under the command of that blackman, as they called him, would apply themselves to torture them with prodigious molestations.

The afflicted wretches were horribly distorted and convulsed; they were pinched black and blue: pins would be run everywhere in their flesh; they would be scalded until they had blisters raised on them; and a thousand other things before hundreds of witnesses were done unto them, evidently preternatural: for if it were preternatural to keep a rigid fast for nine, yea, for fifteen days together; or if it were preternatural to have one's hands tied close together with a rope to be plainly seen, and then by unseen hands presently pulled up a great way from the earth before a crowd of people; such preternatural things were endured by them.

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[37] favor

[38] The Golden Fleece is a Burgundian, not an English order. The allusion is to the story of Jason and the Argonauts, and to Phips's early occupation.

[39] Here follows an account of Phips's services to the colony as governor, and especially of his staunch support of the church.

[40] wisdom concerning (By the old Jewish law and by the laws of England witchcraft was punishable by death.)

[41] 2 *Kings* xvii. 9.

[42] Probably *Delights for the Ingenious in above Fifty Select and Choice Emblems etc. Collected by R. B.,* London, 1684.

[43] played with, used for trivial purposes

[44] Physical torments of various kinds that might not be accounted for by natural laws, as mentioned later.

[45] always

[46] appearance, form

But of all the preternatural things which befell these people, there were none more unaccountable than those wherein the prestigious[47] demons would ever now and then cover the most corporeal things in the world with a fascinating mist of invisibility. As now; a person was cruelly assaulted by a specter, that, she said, run at her with a spindle, though nobody else in the room could see either the specter or the spindle: at last, in her agonies, giving a snatch at the specter, she pulled the spindle away; and it was no sooner got into her hand, but the other folks then present beheld that it was indeed a real, proper, iron spindle; which, when they locked up very safe, it was nevertheless by the demons taken away to do farther mischief.

Again, a person was haunted by a most abusive[48] specter, which came to her, she said, with a sheet about her, though seen to none but herself. After she had undergone a deal of tease from the annoyance of the specter, she gave a violent snatch at the sheet that was upon it; wherefrom she tore a corner, which in her hand immediately was beheld by all that were present, a palpable corner of a sheet: and her father, which was now holding of her, catched, that he might keep what his daughter had so strangely seized; but the specter had like to have wrung his hand off, by endeavoring to wrest it from him; however, he still held it, and several times this odd accident was renewed in the family. There wanted not the oaths of good credible people to these particulars.

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From THE LIFE OF THE RENOWNED JOHN ELIOT

PART I. ARTICLE IV

He that will write of Eliot,[49] must write of[50] charity, or say nothing. His charity was a star of the first magnitude in the bright constellation of his virtues, and the rays of it were wonderfully various and extensive.

His liberality to pious uses, whether public or private, went much beyond the proportions of his little estate in the world. Many hundreds of pounds did he freely bestow upon the poor; and he would, with a very forcible importunity, press his neighbors to join with him in such beneficences. It was a marvelous alacrity with which he embraced all opportunities of relieving any that were miserable; and the good people of Roxbury doubtless cannot remember (but the righteous God will!) how often, and with what ardors, with what arguments, he became a beggar to them for collections in their assemblies, to support such needy objects as had fallen under his observation. The poor counted him their father, and repaired still unto him with a filial confidence in their necessities; and they were more than seven or eight, or indeed than so many scores, who received their portions of his bounty. Like that worthy and famous English general,[51] he could not persuade himself 'that he had any thing but what he gave away,' but he drove a mighty trade at such exercises as he thought would furnish him with bills of exchange, which he hoped "after many days" to find the comfort of; and yet, after all, he would say, like one of the most charitable souls that ever lived in the world, 'that looking over his accounts, he could nowhere find the God of heaven charged a debtor there.' He did not put off his charity to be put in his last will, as many who therein shew that their charity is against their will; but he was his own administrator; he made his own hands his executors, and his own eyes his overseers. It has been remarked, that liberal men are often long-lived men; so do they after many days find the bread with which they have been willing to keep other men alive. The great age of our Eliot was but agreeable to this remark; and when his age had unfitted him for almost all employments, and bereaved him of those gifts and parts which once he had been accomplished with, being asked, 'How he did?' he would sometimes answer, "Alas, I have lost every thing; my understanding leaves me, my memory fails me, my utterance fails me; but, I thank God, my charity holds out still; I find that rather grows than fails!" And I make no question, that at his death, his happy soul was received and welcomed into the "everlasting habitations," by many scores got thither before him, of such as his charity had been liberal unto.

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[47] juggling [48] deceptive

[49] John Eliot (1604-1690), missionary to the Massachusetts Indians. This selection is from a part of the *Magnalia* devoted to the lives of famous colonial clergymen.

[50] The *of* may be equivalent to *in* and may hence refer to all Mather says of Eliot.

[51] Possibly Cromwell, who was generous, and who was idolized by Puritans.

From PART III

. . . The natives of the country now possessed by the New Englanders had been forlorn and wretched heathen ever since their first herding here; and though we know not when or how those Indians first became inhabitants of this mighty continent, yet we may guess that probably the devil decoyed those miserable savages hither, in hopes that the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ would never come here to destroy or disturb his absolute empire over them. But our Eliot was in such ill terms with the devil, as to alarm him with sounding the silver trumpets of Heaven in his territories, and make some noble and zealous attempts towards ousting him of ancient possessions here. There were, I think, twenty several nations (if I may call them so) of Indians upon that spot of ground which fell under the influence of our Three United Colonies;[52] and our Eliot was willing to rescue as many of them as he could from that old usurping landlord of America, who is, "by the wrath of God, the prince of this world." . . . This was the miserable people which our Eliot propounded unto himself to teach and save! And he had a double work incumbent on him; he was to make men of them, ere he could hope to see them saints; they must be civilized ere they could be Christianized; he could not, as Gregory once of our nation,[53] see any thing angelical to bespeak his labors for their eternal welfare: all among them was diabolical. To think on raising a number of these hideous creatures unto the elevations of our holy religion, must argue more than common or little sentiments in the undertaker; but the faith of an Eliot could encounter it!

I confess that was one—I cannot call it so much guess as wish—wherein he was willing a little to indulge himself; and that was, 'that our Indians are the posterity of the dispersed and rejected Israelites,[54] concerning whom our God has promised, that they shall yet be saved by the deliverer coming to turn away ungodliness from them.' He saw the Indians using many parables in their discourses; much given to anointing of their heads; much delighted in dancing, especially after victories; computing their times by nights and months; giving dowries for wives, and causing their women to "dwell by themselves," at certain seasons, for secret causes; and accustoming themselves to grievous mournings and yellings for the dead; all which were usual things among the Israelites. They have, too, a great unkindness for our swine; but I suppose that is because our hogs devour the clams which are a dainty with them.[55] He also saw some learned men looking for the lost Israelites among the Indians in America, and counting that they had thorough-good reasons for doing so. And a few small arguments, or indeed but conjectures, meeting with a favorable disposition in the hearer, will carry some conviction with them; especially if a report of a Manasseh ben Israel[56] be to back them. He saw likewise the judgments threatened unto the Israelites of old, strangely fulfilled upon our Indians; particularly that "Ye shall eat the flesh of your sons," which is done with exquisite cruelties upon the prisoners that they take from one another in their battles. Moreover, it is a prophesy in *Deuteronomy* xxviii. 68, "The Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, thou shalt see it no more again; and there shall ye be sold unto your enemies, and no man shall buy you." This did our Eliot imagine accomplished, when the captives taken by us in our late wars upon them, were sent to be sold[57] in the coasts lying not very remote from Egypt on the Mediterranean sea, and scarce any chapmen[58] would offer to take them off. Being upon such as these accounts not unwilling, if it were possible, to have the Indians found Israelites, they were, you may be sure, not a whit the less "beloved for their (supposed) father's sake";[59] and the fatigues of his travails went on the more cheerfully, or at least the more hopefully, because of such possibilities.

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[52] Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, and Connecticut; or, if the reference is to the time in which the author is writing, Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, and Maine, united under the charter of 1689.

[53] Gregory, afterwards Pope, seeing in the Roman slave market some fair-haired and fair-eyed English boys for sale inquired whence they came. Being told that they were Angles he replied, *"Non Angli, sed angeli"*, (not Angles, but angels) and determined that the people of that tribe should be brought to a knowledge of Christianity.

[54] Ten of the twelve tribes of Jews disappeared from history some twenty-five hundred years ago. The attempt to identify them with the North American Indians has been made by many theorists.

[55] An interesting mixture of musty scholarship and hard Yankee sense.

[56] Manasseh son of Israel. Manasseh was really grandson of Israel, but obtained the blessing of the patriarch and hence became the founder of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. See the interesting narrative in *Genesis* xlviii.

[57] Indians taken captive in the wars were sold by the colonists in the slave markets of the world.

[58] traders

[59] *Romans* xi. 28.

The first step which he judged necessary now to be taken by him, was to learn the Indian language; for he saw them so stupid and senseless, that they would never do so much as inquire after the religion of the strangers now come into their country, much less would they so far imitate us as to leave off their beastly way of living, that they might be partakers of any spiritual advantage by us: unless we could first address them in a language of their own. Behold, new difficulties to be surmounted by our indefatigable Eliot! He hires a native to teach him this exotic language, and, with a laborious care and skill, reduces it into a grammar, which afterwards he published. There is a letter or two of our alphabet, which the Indians never had in theirs; though there were enough of the dog in their temper, there can scarce be found an *r*[60] in their language, (any more than in the language of the Chinese or of the Greenlanders) save that the Indians to the northward, who have a peculiar dialect, pronounce an *r* where an *n* is pronounced by our Indians; but if their alphabet be short, I am sure the words composed of it are long enough to tire the patience of any scholar in the world; they are *sesquipedalia verba,*[61] of which their lingo is composed; one would think they had been growing ever since Babel unto the dimensions to which they are now extended. For instance, if my reader will count how many letters there are in this one word, *nummatchekodtantamooonganunnonash,* when he has done, for his reward, I'll tell him it signifies no more in English than *our lusts;* and if I were to translate, *our loves,* it must be nothing shorter than *noowomantammooonkanunonnash.* Or, to give my reader a longer word than either of these, *kummogkodonattoottummooetiteaongannunnonash* is in English *our question:* but I pray, sir, count the letters! Nor do we find in all this language the least affinity to, or derivation from any European speech that we are acquainted with. I know not what thoughts it will produce in my reader, when I inform him that once, finding that the demons in a possessed young woman understood the Latin, and Greek, and Hebrew languages, my curiosity led me to make trial of this Indian language, and the demons did seem as if they did not understand it.[62] This tedious language our Eliot (the anagram of whose name was *Toile*)[63] quickly became a master of; he employed a pregnant and witty[64] Indian, who also spoke English well, for his assistance in it; and compiling some discourses by his help, he would single out a word, a noun, a verb, and pursue it through all its variations: having finished his grammar, at the close he writes, "Prayers and pains through faith in Christ Jesus will do any thing!" and being by his prayers and pains thus furnished, he set himself in the year 1646 to preach the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ among these desolate outcasts. . . .

1694-1697 1702

From THE DIARY OF COTTON MATHER[1]

. . . .

8 m. Thursday. [October 22, 1702.] This day the Lord graciously carried me, thro' the duties of a fast, which was kept throughout the province.

God helps me, not only on this day, but at other times with great frequency and fervency to commit my children into his merciful hands, now the smallpox is on every side of us.

And being in extreme distress about my poor, feeble, wasted consort, who after more than twenty weeks' languishment, is, for my further trial, fallen into the symptoms of an hopeless consumption, I did the night before the fast, keep, as far as my strength would permit, a vigil.[2] In this vigil after I had, prostrate in the dust, left the case of my consort with the Lord, I repaired unto my bedchamber to take some rest, the latter part of the night. But, before my going to rest, I took my *Psalm-book* into my hand that I might sing something for the quieting of my uneasy mind.

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[60] *R* is sometimes from its guttural pronunciation called the dog's letter.

[61] Words a foot and a half long. Used humorously by Horace.

[62] Naïvely at variance with Mather's theory of the wholly Satanic leadership of the poor Indians.

[63] A good deal was made of the significance of such word transformations in Mather's time.

[64] quick (of wit) and intelligent

[1] Cotton Mather's *Diary,* kept between the years 1681 and 1724, differs in style from his formal writings. It may well be compared in point of self-consciousness with the diary of Sewall. The extracts are taken from that time of his life in which he was at the full height of his physical vigor and personal influence.

[2] This passage is to be taken literally. The religious exercises of Mather were as rigorous as those of many a medieval saint. His diary shows that in one year he kept sixty fasts and twenty vigils. Indeed, he and other extreme Puritans may best be understood in their spiritual experiences when approached through a reading of some such biography as that of Saint Catharine of Siena.

And, unto my surprise, the very first verse that at the opening of the book my eye was carried unto was that: *Psal.* 105:37.

And there was not among their tribes,
A feeble person told.

Lord, thought I! This won't be fulfilled until the resurrection of the dead. The tribes of the raised will not have one feeble person among them. And must I resign the condition of my consort, at last, unto what shall be done in the future state? Lord, Thy will be done!

Behold a strange thing! On the night after the fast, my consort had appearing to her, (she supposes, in her sleep) a grave person, who brought with him a woman in the most meager and wretched circumstances imaginable. My consort fell into the praises of God, in that her condition was not yet so miserably circumstanced as that woman's now before her. The grave person then told her that, inasmuch as there were at this time a couple of symptoms become insupportable to her, he would propose a way wherein she should obtain some help for them. First, for her intolerable pain in her breast, said he, let them cut the warm wool from a living sheep and apply it warm unto the grieved pain. Next, for her salivation, which hitherto nothing had relieved, said he, take a tankard of spring-water, and therein over the fire dissolve an agreeable quantity of mastics, and of gum isinglass: drink of this liquor now and then to strengthen the glands, which ought to have been done a great while ago.

She told this on Friday to her principal physician,[3] who mightily encouraged our trying the experiments. We did it; and unto our astonishment my consort revived at a most unexpected rate; insomuch that she came twice on Saturday out of her sick chamber unto me in my study; and there she asked me to give thanks unto God with her, and for her, on the account of the recovery in so surprising a degree begun unto her.

After this, my dear consort continued much refreshed and yet feeble. We had great hopes of her becoming a strong person again, and yet great fears, lest some further latent mischief within her prove after all too hard for her.

8 m. Friday. [October 30, 1702.] Yesterday, I first saw my *Church History* since the publication of it.[4] A gentleman arrived here from Newcastle, in England, that had bought it there. Wherefore, I set apart this day for solemn thanksgiving unto God for his watchful and gracious providence over that work, and for the harvest of so many prayers, and cares, and tears, and resignations, as I had employed upon it.

My religious friend, Mr. Bromfield, who had been singularly helpful to the publication of that great book,[5] (of twenty shillings price, at London) came to me at the close of the day, to join with me in some of my praises to God.

On this day my little daughter, Nibby, began to fall sick of the smallpox.[6] The dreadful disease, which is raging in the neighborhood, is now got into my poor family. God prepare me, God prepare me, for what is coming upon me!

The child was favorably visited in comparison of what many are.

It becomes impossible for me to record much in these memorials; the vast numbers of the sick among my neighbors and the duties which I owe to the sick in my own family engrossing my time exceedingly.

It being impossible for me to visit the many scores of sick families in my neighborhood, and yet it being my desire to visit them as far as 'tis possible, I composed a sheet which I entitled, *Wholesome Words, or, A visit of Advice to Families Visited with Sickness.* I put myself to the small expense of printing it; and then dividing my flock into three parts, I singled out three honest men, unto whom I committed the care of lodging a sheet in every family, as fast as they should hear of any falling sick in it. The Lord makes this my poor essay[7] exceeding acceptable and serviceable.

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[3] It is said that as late as 1721 there was but one regularly trained physician in Boston. The profession of medicine in America, as in England, was in its infancy, any person who served an apprenticeship to an older practitioner being deemed fit to give medical advice. One Boston surgeon was a butcher. Educated gentlemen trained neither professionally nor by apprenticeship also frequently gave medical advice to their families or friends. Cotton Mather and Michael Wigglesworth were considered good physicians. The former composed a long medical treatise, still in manuscript, entitled *The Angel of Bethesda.*

[4] The force of this paragraph is felt only when we understand that, as Professor Wendell points out in his *Literary History of America,* Mather undertook the *Magnalia* as an act of religious patriotism. He could see liberalism growing apace and he hoped to stay the scourge by calling to mind the providences through which the Church had passed. Hence his devout thankfulness that the consecrated task was finished.

[5] It was published in London, the only folio in our literature.

[6] Nineteen years later, Mather introduced inoculation to combat the disease, and was so opposed that his life was endangered by a bomb thrown in at his study window.

The month of November coming on, I had on my mind a strong impression to look out some agreeable paragraph of scripture to be handled in my public ministry, while the two dreadful and mortal sicknesses of the smallpox and the scarlet fever should be raging among us. After earnest supplications to the Lord for his direction I used an action which I would not encourage ever to be used in any divinatory way.[8] I thought I would observe whether the first place that occurred at my opening of my Bible would prove suitable or no; or such as might carry any intimation of angelical direction in it. Unto my amazement, it proved the history of our Lord's curing the sick son of the nobleman, in the fourth chapter of *John*. I saw that the whole Bible afforded not a more agreeable or profitable paragraph. So I began a course of sermons upon it.

9 m. Saturday. [November 14.] The awful circumstances upon me, (and upon the town) caused me to lie in the dust this day with secret prayer and fasting before the Lord.

In this month, my lovely consort again declines; and some latent mischief within her, brings on a feebleness that gives us great apprehensions of a mortal issue.

9 m. Saturday. [November 21.] I obtained, I compelled, the leisure for another day of prayer with fasting in my study, to carry my distressed family unto the Lord.

Humiliations are coming thick upon me!

My study is though a large yet a warm chamber, (the hangings[9] whereof are boxes with between two and three thousand books in them); and we are so circumstanced that my house, though none of the smallest, cannot afford a safe hospital now for my sick folks anywhere so well as there. So I resigned my study for an hospital to my little folks that are falling sick of a loathsome disease. God sanctified this to humble me for my not serving him as I should have done in my study; which provokes him to chase me out of it. . . . .

9 m. [November 24.] My daughter Nanny was taken sick. She proved full and blind and very sore of the distemper.

9 m. [November 27.] My son Increase was taken sick. He also proved pretty full and blind and sore, though not so bad as his sister.

The little creatures keep calling for me so often to pray with them, that I can scarce do it less than ten or a dozen times in a day; besides what I do with my neighbors.

But the most exquisite of my trials was the condition of my lovely consort. It now began to be hopeless.

Lord, if thy poor servant have any grace in him, it will now be tried unto the uttermost!

How shall I glorify the Lord in the midst of these distresses and confusions? Truly, after my sorry manner I did set myself to do it.

I spent much time with my lovely consort. I prayed with her as agreeably as I could. I endeavored her most consummate preparation for the heavenly world by suitable questions and proposals. I comforted her with as lively discourses upon the glory of heaven whereto she was going, as I could make unto her. I disposed her and myself, all that I could, unto a glorious resignation.

At last the black day arrives: Tuesday, the first of December. I had never yet seen such a black day in all the time of my pilgrimage. The desire of my eyes is this day to be taken from me. Her death is lingering and painful. All the forenoon of this day she lies in the pangs of death; sensible, until the last minute or two before her final expiration.

I cannot remember the discourses that passed between us. Only her devout soul was full of satisfaction about her going to a state of blessedness with the Lord Jesus Christ, and as far as my distress would permit me, I studied how to confirm her satisfaction and consolation.

This I remember, that a little before she died I asked her to tell me faithfully what fault she had seen in my conversation[10] that she would advise me to rectify. She replied (which I wondered at) that she knew of none, but that God had made what she had observed in my conversation exceedingly serviceable unto her, to bring her much nearer unto himself.

When I saw to what a point of resignation I was now called of the Lord I resolved, with his help therein, to glorify him. So, two hours before my lovely consort expired, I kneeled by her bedside, and I took into my two hands a dear hand, the dearest in the world. With her then in my hands, I solemnly and sincerely gave her up unto the Lord; and in token of my real resignation I gently put her out of my hands, and laid away a most lovely hand, resolving that I would never touch it any more!

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[7] Attempt, or perhaps with a double meaning of *trial* and *tentative discourse*. See history of the word.

[8] Divination in the manner described was common then and is perhaps not unknown even now. Mather is drawn toward the practice even while intellectually condemning it.

[9] wall coverings

[10] behavior, public and private

This was the hardest and perhaps the bravest action that ever I did. She afterwards told me that she signed and sealed my act of resignation. And though, before that, she called for me continually, she after this never asked for me any more.

She continued until near two o'clock in the afternoon. And the last sensible word that she spoke, was to her weeping father, "Heaven, Heaven will make amends for all."

When she was expired, I immediately prayed with her father, and the other weeping people in the chamber, for the grace to carry it well under the present calamity, and I did consummate my resignation in terms as full of glory to the wisdom and goodness and allsufficiency of the Lord, as I could utter.

She lived with me just as many years as she had lived in the world before she came to me; with an addition of the seven months, wherein her dying languishments were preparing me to part with her. When I had been married unto her just sixteen years, (and as near as I can recollect, on that very week, sixteen years, that I was married unto her) God began to take her from me. I then said unto my father, "I seem to feel in my mind, the bodings of a dark cloud hanging over my family." The cloud came on, and now, see what was in it!

On the Friday following, my lovely consort had a very honorable funeral.

Indeed, I do not know of a gentlewoman who has died in this land, these many years, more generally esteemed and lamented. This was every one's observation.

. . . .

1702 1911

SARAH KEMBLE KNIGHT

From HER PRIVATE JOURNAL*[1]

Born in Boston, 1666, died there, 1727. Madam Knight, as she was called in consideration of her station in life, belonged to a substantial Boston family, and, for the time in which she lived, was well educated.

. . . .

Tuesday, October the third, about 8 in the morning, I with the Post[2] proceeded forward without observing any thing remarkable; And about two, afternoon, Arrived at the Post's second stage, where the western Post mett him and exchanged Letters. Here, having called for something to eat, the woman bro't in a Twisted thing like a cable, but something whiter; and laying it on the bord, tugg'd for life to bring it into a capacity to spread; which having with great pains accomplished, shee serv'd in a dish of Pork and Cabage, I suppose the remains of Dinner. The sause was of a deep Purple, which I tho't was boil'd in her dye Kettle; the bread was Indian,[3] and every thing on the Table service Agreeable to[4] these. I, being hungry, gott a little down; but my stomach was soon cloy'd, and what cabbage I swallowed serv'd me for a Cudd the whole day after.

Having here discharged the Ordnary[5] for self and Guide, (as I understood was the custom,) About Three afternoon went on with my Third Guide, who Rode very hard; and having crossed Providence Ferry,[6] we come to a River[7] which they Generally Ride thro'. But I dare not venture; so the Post got a Ladd and Cannoo to carry me to tother side, and hee rid thro' and Led my hors. The Cannoo was very small and shallow, so that when we were in she seem'd redy to take in water, which greatly terrified mee, and caused me to be very circumspect, sitting with my hands fast on each side, my eyes stedy, not daring so much as to lodg my tongue a hair's breadth more on one side of my mouth then tother, nor so much as think on Lott's wife,[8] for a wry thought would have oversett our wherey: But was soon put out of this pain, by feeling the Cannoo on shore, which I as soon almost saluted with my feet; and Rewarding my sculler, again mounted and made the best of our way forwards. The Rode here was very even and the day pleasant, it being now near Sunsett. But the Post told mee we had neer 14 miles to Ride to the next Stage, (where we were to Lodg.) I askt him of the rest of the Rode, foreseeing wee must travail in the night. Hee told mee there was a bad River[9] we were to Ride thro', which was so very firce a hors could sometimes hardly stem it: But it was but narrow, and wee should soon be over. I cannot express The concern of mind this relation sett me in: no thoughts but those of the dang'ros River could entertain my Imagination, and they were as formidable as varios, still[10] Tormenting me with blackest Ideas of my Approching fate—Sometimes seing my self drowning, otherwhiles drowned, and at the best like a holy Sister Just come out of a Spiritual Bath in dripping Garments.

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*The manuscript of Madam Knight's journal is not in her own hand, and contains some evident mistakes. In the extracts here given, the spelling and punctuation follow the manuscript.

[1] In 1704-5, apparently to secure her interest in the settlement of an estate, Mrs. Knight made the journey from Boston to New York, a distance then estimated at 271 miles, and return. Boston then contained some ten thousand inhabitants, and New York about half as many. Her journey may be followed with tolerable accuracy on any good map. It led along the old "Pequot path," and is approximately the route of the first post road between the two cities. The journal, made for her private satisfaction only, was first printed in 1825. Donald G. Mitchell says of it, "The little book is not perhaps altogether Addisonian: but the vivacious author was very keen of eye, and quick of hearing; and I think has given us the most realistic and vivid account of cross-country journeyings in her time which can anywhere be found."

[2] postman

[3] of Indian corn

[4] in harmony with

[5] The reckoning, bill. Each postman served successively as guide to Mrs. Knight. After a few days she found it so fatiguing to keep the pace, that she hired guides of her own.

[6] This was apparently near the present city of Providence, although the distances given farther on seem to cast this into doubt. The town of Providence is not mentioned, perhaps because of its unimportance, for it had dwindled from 500 to 26 inhabitants during the Pequot war.

[7] Probably the Pawtuxet.

Now was the Glorious Luminary, with his swift Coursers arrived at his Stage,[11] leaving poor me with the rest of this part of the lower world in darkness, with which wee were soon Surrounded. The only Glimering we now had was from the spangled Skies, Whose Imperfect Reflections rendered every Object formidable. Each lifeless Trunk, with its shatter'd Limbs, appear'd an Armed Enymie; and every little stump like a Ravenous devourer. Nor could I so much as discern my Guide, when at any distance, which added to the terror.

Thus, absolutely lost in Thought, and dying with the very thoughts of drowning, I come up with the post, who I did not see till even with his Hors: he told mee he stopt for mee; and wee Rode on Very deliberatly a few paces, when we entred a Thickett of Trees and Shrubbs, and I perceived by the Hors's going, we were on the descent of a Hill, which, as wee come neerer the bottom, 'twas totaly dark with the Trees that surrounded it. But I knew by the Going of the Hors wee had entred the water, which my Guide told mee was the hazzardos River he had told me off; and hee, Riding up close to my Side, Bid me not fear—we should be over Imediatly. I now ralyed all the Courage I was mistriss of, Knowing that I must either Venture my fate of drowning, or be left like the Children in the wood. So, as the Post bid me, I gave Reins to my Nagg; and sitting as Stedy as Just before in the Cannoo, in a few minutes got safe to the other side, which hee told mee was the Narragansett country.

Here We found great difficulty in Travailing, the way being very narrow, and on each side the Trees and bushes gave us very unpleasent welcomes with their Branches and bow's, which wee could not avoid, it being so exceeding dark. My Guide, as before so now, putt on harder than I, with my weary bones, could follow; so left mee and the way beehind him. Now Returned my distressed aprehensions of the place where I was: the dolesome woods, my Company next to none, Going I knew not whither, and encompased with Terrifying darkness; The least of which was enough to startle a more Masculine courage. Added to which the Reflections, as in the afternoon of the day that my Call[12] was very Questionable, which till then I had not so Prudently as I ought considered. Now, coming to the foot of a hill, I found great difficulty in ascending; But being got to the Top, was there amply recompenced with the friendly Appearance of the Kind Conductress of the night, Just then Advancing above the Horisontall Line. The Raptures which the Sight of that fair Planett produced in mee, caus'd mee, for the Moment to forgett my present wearyness and past toils; and Inspir'd me for most of the remaining way with very divirting tho'ts, some of which, with the other Occurances of the day, I reserved to note down when I should come to my Stage. My tho'ts on the sight of the moon were to this purpose:

Fair Cynthia,[13] all the Homage that I may
Unto a Creature,[14] unto thee I pay;
In Lonesome woods to meet so kind a guide,
To Mee 's more worth than all the world beside.
Some Joy I felt just now, when safe got or'e
Yon Surly River to this Rugged shore,
Deeming Rough welcomes from these clownish[15] Trees,

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[8] *Genesis* xix. 26.
[9] Perhaps the Potowomut River.
[10] always
[11] the end of his journey
[12] errand (perhaps, also, call of duty)
[13] The moon.
[14] A created thing. The Puritans and their immediate descendents interpreted the Ten Commandments very strictly.
[15] rustic

Better than Lodgings with Nereidees.[16]
Yet swelling fears surprise; all dark appears—
Nothing but Light can disipate those fears.
My fainting vitals can't lend strength to say,
But softly whisper, O I wish 'twere day.
The murmer hardly warm'd the Ambient air,
E're thy Bright Aspect rescues from dispair:
Makes the old Hagg[17] her sable mantle loose,
And a Bright Joy do's through my Soul diffuse.
The Boistero's[18] Trees now Lend a Passage Free,
And pleasent prospects thou giv'st light to see.[19]

From hence wee kept on, with more ease than before: the way being smooth and even, the night warm and serene, and the Tall and thick Trees at a distance, especially when the moon glar'd light through the branches, fill'd my Imagination with the pleasent delusion of a Sumpteous citty, fill'd with famous Buildings and churches, with their spiring steeples, Balconies, Galleries and I know not what: Granduers which I had heard of, and which the stories of foreign countries had given me the Idea of.

Here stood a Lofty church—there is a steeple,
And there the Grand Parade—O see the people!
That Famouse Castle there, were I but nigh,
To see the mote and Bridg and walls so high—
They'r very fine! sais my deluded eye.

Being thus agreably entertain'd without a thou't of any thing but thoughts themselves, I on a suden was Rous'd from these pleasing Imaginations, by the Post's sounding his horn, which assured mee hee was arrived at the Stage, where we were to Lodg: and that musick was then most musickall and agreeable to mee.

Being come to mr. Havens', I was very civilly Received, and courteously entertained, in a clean comfortable House; and the Good woman was very active in helping off my Riding clothes, and then ask't what I would eat. I told her I had some Chocolett, if shee would prepare it; which with the help of some Milk, and a little clean brass Kettle, she soon effected to my satisfaction. I then betook me to my Apartment, which was a little Room parted from the Kitchen by a single bord partition; where, after I had noted the Occurrances of the past day, I went to bed, which, tho' pretty hard, Yet neet and handsome. But I could get no sleep, because of the Clamor of some of the Town tope-ers in next Room, Who were entred into a strong debate concerning the Signifycation of the name of their Country, (viz.) *Narraganset.*[20] One said it was named so by the Indians, because there grew a Brier there, of a prodigious Highth and bigness, the like hardly ever known, called by the Indians Narragansett; And quotes an Indian of so Barberous a name for his Author, that I could not write it. His Antagonist Replyed no—It was from a Spring it had its name, which hee well knew where it was, which was extreem cold in summer, and as Hott as could be imagined in the winter, which was much resorted too by the natives, and by them called Narragansett, (Hott and Cold,) and that was the originall of their places name—with a thousand Impertinances[21] not worth notice, which He utter'd with such a Roreing voice and Thundering blows with the fist of wickedness on the Table, that it peirced my very head. I heartily fretted, and wish't 'um tongue tyed; but with as little succes as a friend of mine once, who was (as shee said) kept a whole night awake, on a Jorny, by a country Left.[22] and a Sergent, Insigne and a Deacon, contriving how to bring a triangle into a Square. They kept calling for tother Gill, which while they were swallowing, was some Intermission; But presently, like Oyle to fire, encreased the flame. I set my Candle on a Chest by the bed side, and setting up, fell to my old way of composing my Resentments, in the following manner:

I ask thy aid, O Potent Rum!
To Charm these wrangling Topers Dum.
Thou hast their Giddy Brains possest—
The man confounded with the Beast—
And I, poor I, can get no rest.
Intoxicate them with thy fumes:
O still their Tongues till morning comes!

And I know not but my wishes took effect; for the dispute soon ended with 'tother Dram; and so Good night!

Wedensday, October 4th. About four in the morning, we set out for Kingston (for so was the Town called) with a french Docter in our company. Hee and the Post put on very furiously, so that I could not keep up with them, only as now and then they'd stop till they see mee. This Rode was poorly furnished with accommodations for Travellers, so that we were forced to ride 22 miles by the post's account, but neerer thirty by mine, before wee could bait so much as our Horses, which I exceedingly complained of. But the post encourag'd mee, by saying wee should be well accommodated anon at mr. Devills, a few miles further. But I questioned whether we ought to go to the Devil to be helpt out of affliction. However, like the rest of Deluded souls that post to the Infernal denn, Wee made all posible speed to this Devil's Habitation; where alliting, in full assurance of good accommodation, wee were going in. But meeting his two daughters, as I suposed twins, they so neerly resembled each other, both in features and habit, and look't as old as the Divel himselfe, and quite as Ugly, We desired entertainm't, but could hardly get a word out of 'um, till with our Importunity, telling them our necesity, &c. they call'd the old Sophister, who was as sparing of his words as his daughters had bin, and no, or none, was the reply's hee made us to our demands. Hee differed only in this from the old fellow in to'ther Country: hee let us depart. However, I thought it proper to warn poor Travailers to endeavour to Avoid falling into circumstances like ours, which, at our next Stage I sat down and did as followeth:

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[16] The Nereids were the guardian spirits of streams.

[17] spirit of night

[18] strong-growing, massed

[19] The naïve amateurishness of these lines is characteristic of early American verse. See, for an English analogy, the bit of Bunyan's verse in *Twelve Centuries of English Poetry and Prose*, p. 269.

[20] See Note 16 under Johnson, p. 34.

[21] irrelevant things

[22] leftenant, lieutenant

May all that dread the cruel feind of night
Keep on, and not at this curs't Mansion light.
'Tis Hell; 'tis Hell! and Devills here do dwell:
Here dwells the Devill—surely this's Hell.
Nothing but Wants:[23] a drop to cool yo'r Tongue
Cant be procur'd these cruel Feinds among.
Plenty of horrid Grins and looks sevear,
Hunger and thirst, But pitty's bannish'd here—
The Right hand keep, if Hell on Earth you fear!

Thus leaving this habitation of cruelty, we went forward; and arriving at an Ordinary[24] about two mile further, found tollerable accommodation. But our Hostes, being a pretty full mouth'd old creature, entertain'd our fellow travailer, the french Docter, with Inumirable complaints of her bodily infirmities; and whisperd to him so lou'd, that all the House had as full a hearing as hee; which was very divirting to the company, (of which there was a great many,) as one might see by their sneering. But poor weary I slipt out to enter my mind in my Jornal, and left my Great Landly with her Talkative Guests to themselves.

From hence we proceeded (about ten forenoon) through the Narragansett country, pretty Leisurely; and about one afternoon come to Paukataug[25] River, which was about two hundred paces over, and now very high, and no way over to to'ther side but this. I darid not venture to Ride thro, my courage at best in such cases but small, And now at the Lowest Ebb, by reason of my weary, very weary, hungry, and uneasy Circumstances. So takeing leave of my company, tho' with no little Reluctance, that I could not proceed with them on my Jorny, Stop at a little cottage Just by the River, to wait the Waters falling, which the old man that lived there said would be in a little time, and he would conduct me safe over. This little Hutt was one of the wretchedest I ever saw a habitation for human creatures. It was suported with shores[26] enclosed with Clapbords, laid on Lengthways, and so much asunder, that the Light come throu' every where; the doore tyed on with a cord in the place of hinges; The floor the bear earth; no windows but such as the thin covering afforded, nor any furniture but a Bedd with a glass Bottle hanging at the head on't; an earthan cupp, a small pewter Bason, A Bord with sticks to stand on, instead of a table, and a block or two in the corner instead of chairs. The family were the old man, his wife and two Children; all and every part being the picture of poverty. Notwithstanding both the Hutt and its Inhabitance were very clean and tydee: to the crossing the Old Proverb, that bare walls make giddy hows-wifes.

. . . .

Saturday, Oct. 7th, wee[27] sett out early in the Morning, and being something unaquainted with the way, having ask't it of some wee mett, they told us wee must Ride a mile or two and turne down a Lane on the Right hand; and by their Direction wee Rode on but not Yet comeing to the turning, we mett a Young fellow and ask't him how farr it was to the Lane which turn'd down towards Guilford. Hee said wee must Ride a little further, and turn down by the Corner of uncle Sams Lott. My Guide vented his Spleen at the Lubber; and we soon after came into the Rhode, and keeping still on, without any thing further Remarkabell, about two a clock afternoon we arrived at New Haven, where I was received with all Posible Respects and civility. Here I discharged Mr. Wheeler with a reward to his satisfaction, and took some time to rest after so long and toilsome a Journey; And Inform'd myselfe of the manners and customs of the place, and at the same time employed myselfe in the afair I went there upon.

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[23] is lacking
[24] tavern

[25] Pawkatuck
[26] props
[27] Mrs. Knight and her guide, Joshua Wheeler. They were now at Killingsworth, Connecticut.

They are Govern'd by the same Laws as wee in Boston, (or little differing,) thr'out this whole Colony of Connecticot,[28] And much the same way of Church Government, and many of them good, Sociable people, and I hope Religious too: but a little too much Independant in their principalls, and, as I have been told, were formerly in their Zeal very Riggid in their Administrations towards such as their Lawes made Offenders, even to a harmless Kiss or Innocent merriment among Young people. Whipping being a frequent and counted an easy Punishment, about which, as other Crimes, the Judges were absolute in their Sentances.

. . . Their Diversions in this part of the Country are on Lecture days[29] and Training days mostly: on the former there is Riding from town to town.

And on training dayes The Youth divert themselves by Shooting at the Target, as they call it, (but it very much resembles a pillory,) where hee that hitts neerest the white has some yards of Red Ribbin presented him, which being tied to his hattband, the two ends streeming down his back, he is Led away in Triumph, with great applause, as the winners of the Olympiack Games.[30] They generally marry very young: the males oftener as I am told under twentie than above; they generally make public wedings, and have a way something singular (as they say) in some of them, viz. Just before Joyning hands the Bridegroom quitts the place, who is soon followed by the Bridesmen, and as it were, dragg'd back to duty—being the reverse to the former practice among us, to steal Mrs. Bride.

There are great plenty of Oysters all along by the sea side, as farr as I Rode in the Collony, and those very good. And they Generally lived very well and comfortably in their famelies. But too Indulgent (especially the farmers) to their slaves: sufering too great familiarity from them, permitting them to sit at Table and eat with them, (as they say to save time,) and into the dish goes the black hoof as freely as the white hand. They told me that there was a farmer lived nere the Town where I lodgd who had some difference with his slave, concerning something the master had promised him and did not punctualy perform; which caused some hard words between them; But at length they put the matter to Arbitration and Bound themselves to stand to the award of such as they named—which done, the Arbitrators Having heard the Allegations of both parties, Order the master to pay 40s to black face, and acknowledge his fault. And so the matter ended: the poor master very honestly standing to the award.

There are every where in the Towns as I passed, a Number of Indians the Natives of the Country, and are the most salvage of all the salvages of that kind that I had ever Seen: little or no care taken (as I heard upon enquiry) to make them otherwise. They have in some places Landes of their owne, and Govern'd by Law's of their own making;—they marry many wives and at pleasure put them away, and on the least dislike or fickle humor, on either side, saying *stand away* to one another is a sufficient Divorce. And indeed those uncomely *Stand aways* are too much in Vougue among the English in this (Indulgent Colony) as their Records plentifully prove, and that on very trivial matters, of which some have been told me, but are not proper to be Related by a Female pen, tho some of that foolish sex have had too large a share in the story.

If the natives committ any crime on their own precincts among themselves, the English takes no Cognezens of. But if on the English ground, they are punishable by our Laws. They mourn for their Dead by blacking their faces, and cutting their hair, after an Awkerd and frightfull manner; But can't bear You should mention the names of their dead Relations to them: they trade most for Rum, for which they'd hazzard their very lives; and the English fit[31] them Generally as well, by seasoning it plentifully with water.

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[28] Mrs. Knight feels herself to be in a foreign country, a fact that throws a little light on the feeling of each separate colony for its independence. This led to a certain amount of estrangement quite to the time of the Constitution (1789).

[29] The midweek religious lecture was generally on Thursday afternoon, and the services were less formal than on Sunday.

[30] The Olympic games held every four years from 776 B. C. at Olympia, constituted the greatest festival of the Greek race.

They give the title of merchant to every trader; who Rate their Goods according to the time and spetia[32] they pay in: viz. Pay, mony, Pay as mony, and trusting. *Pay* is Grain, Pork, Beef, &c. at the prices sett by the General Court[33] that Year; *mony* is pieces of Eight, Ryalls, or Boston or Bay shillings[34] (as they call them,) or Good hard money, as sometimes silver coin is termed by them; also Wampom, vizt. Indian beads which serves for change. *Pay as mony* is provisions, as aforesaid one Third cheaper then as the Assembly or General Court sets it; and *Trust* as they and the merchant agree for time.

Now, when the buyer comes to ask for a comodity, sometimes before the merchant answers that he has it, he sais, *is Your pay redy?* Perhaps the Chap Reply's Yes: what do You pay in? say's the merchant. The buyer having answered, then the price is set; as suppose he wants a sixpenny knife, in pay it is 12d—in pay as money eight pence, and hard money its own price, viz. 6d. It seems a very Intricate way of trade and what Lex Mercatoria[35] had not thought of.

Being at a merchants house, in come a tall country fellow, with his alfogeos[36] full of Tobacco; for they seldom Loose their Cudd, but keep Chewing and Spitting as long as they'r eyes are open,—he advanc't to the midle of the Room, makes an Awkward Nodd, and spitting a Large deal of Aromatick Tincture, he gave a scrape with his shovel like shoo, leaving a small shovel full of dirt on the floor, made a full stop, Hugging his own pretty Body with his hands under his arms, Stood staring rown'd him, like a Catt let out of a Baskett. At last, like the creature[37] Balamm Rode on, he opened his mouth and said: have You any Ribinen for Hatbands to sell I pray? The Questions and Answers about the pay being past, the Ribin is bro't and opened. Bumpkin Simpers, cryes its confounded Gay I vow; and beckning to the door, in comes Jone Tawdry dropping about 50 curtsees, and stands by him: hee shows her the Ribin. *Law, You,* sais shee, *its right Gent,*[38] do You, take it, *tis dreadfull pretty.* Then she enquires, *have you any hood silk I pray?* which being brought and bought, *Have You any thred silk to sew it with* says shee, which being accommodated with they Departed. They Generaly stand after they come in a great while speachless, and sometimes dont say a word till they are askt what they want, which I impute to the Awe they stand in of the merchants, who they are constantly almost Indebted too; and must take what they bring without Liberty to choose for themselves; but they serve them as well, making the merchants stay long enough for their pay.

We may Observe here the great necessity and bennifitt both of Education and Conversation;[39] for these people have as Large a portion of mother witt, and sometimes a Larger, than those who have bin brought up in Citties; But for want of emprovements, Render themselves almost Ridiculos, as above. I should be glad if they would leave such follies, and am sure all that Love Clean Houses (at least) would be glad on't too.

They are generaly very plain in their dress, throuout all the Colony, as I saw, and follow one another in their modes; that You may know where they belong, especially the women, meet them where you will.

Their Cheif Red Letter day is St. Election,[40] which is annually Observed according to Charter, to choose their Govenr: a blessing they can never be thankfull enough for, as they will find, if ever it be their hard fortune to loose it.[41] The present Govenor in Conecticott is the Honorable John Winthrop Esq. A Gentleman of an Ancient and Honourable Family, whose Father was Govenor here sometime before, and his Grand father had bin Govr of the Massachusetts. This gentleman is a very curteous and afable person, much Given to Hospitality, and has by his Good services Gain'd the affections of the people as much as any who had bin before him in that post.

Decr. 6th. Being by this time well Recruited and rested after my Journy, my business lying unfinished by some concerns at New York depending thereupon, my

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[31] suit, satisfy

[32] specie

[33] The General Courts of the colonies were wont to set the prices of staples.

[34] The Spanish dollar or "piece of eight" contained eight reals. The Bay Shilling was coined by the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

[35] The law of merchants; trade rules having a certain legal standing.

[36] Sp. *alforja,* saddlebag; here, of course, cheeks.

[37] *Numbers* xxii. 21-33.

[38] elegant

[39] social intercourse

[40] Jocosely: the general election day was celebrated as a holiday, just as a saint's day would be in a Catholic country.

[41] The governor of Massachusetts was at this time appointed by the king, to the general discontent of the colony.

Kinsman, Mr. Thomas Trowbridge of New Haven, must needs take a Journy there before it could be accomplished, I resolved to go there in company with him, and a man of the town which I engaged to wait on[42] me there. Accordingly, Dec. 6th we set out from New Haven, and about 11 same morning came to Stratford ferry; which crossing, about two miles on the other side Baited our horses and would have eat a morsell ourselves, But the Pumpkin and Indian mixt Bred had such an Aspect, and the Bare-legg'd Punch[43] so awkerd or rather Awfull a sound, that we left both, and proceeded forward, and about seven at night come to Fairfield, where we met with good entertainment and Lodg'd; and early next morning set forward to Norowalk, from its halfe Indian name *North-walk,* when about 12 at noon we arrived, and Had a Dinner of Fryed Venison, very savoury. Landlady wanting some pepper in the seasoning, bid the Girl hand her the spice in the little *Gay* cupp on the shelfe. From hence we Hasted towards Rye, walking and Leading our Horses neer a mile together, up a prodigios high Hill; and so Riding till about nine at night, and there arrived and took up our Lodgings at an ordinary, which a French family kept. Here being very hungry, I desired a fricasee, which the Frenchman undertakeing, mannaged so contrary to my notion of Cookery, that I hastned to Bed superless; And being shewd the way up a pair of stairs which had such a narrow passage that I had almost stopt by the Bulk of my Body; But arriving at my apartment found it to be a little Lento[44] Chamber furnisht amongst other Rubbish with a High Bedd and a Low one, a Long Table, a Bench and a Bottomless chair,—Little Miss went to scratch up my Kennell which Russelled as if shee'd bin in the Barn amongst the Husks, and supose such was the contents of the tickin—nevertheless being exceeding weary, down I laid my poor Carkes (never more tired) and found my Covering as scanty as my Bed was hard. Annon I heard another Russelling noise in The Room—called to know the matter—Little miss said shee was making a bed for the men; who, when they were in Bed, complained their leggs lay out of it by reason of its shortness—my poor bones complained bitterly not being used to such Lodgings, and so did the man who was with us; and poor I made but one Grone, which was from the time I went to bed to the time I Riss, which was about three in the morning, Setting up by the Fire till Light, and having discharged our ordinary which was as dear as if we had had far Better fare—wee took our leave of Monsier and about seven in the morn come to New Rochell a french town, where we had a good Breakfast. And in the strength of that about an how'r before sunsett got to York. Here I applyd myself to Mr. Burroughs, a merchant to whom I was recommended by my Kinsman Capt. Prout, and received great Civilities from him and his spouse, who were now both Deaf but very agreeable in their Conversation, Diverting me with pleasant stories of their knowledge in Brittan from whence they both come. . . .

The Cittie of New York is a pleasant, well compacted place, situated on a Commodius River which is a fine harbour for shipping. The Buildings Brick Generaly, very stately and high, though not altogether like ours in Boston. The Bricks in some of the Houses are of divers Coullers and laid in Checkers, being glazed look very agreeable. The inside of them are neat to admiration, the wooden work, for only the walls are plasterd, and the Sumers[45] and Gist[46] are plained and kept very white scowr'd as so is all the partitions if made of Bords. The fire places have no Jambs (as ours have) But the Backs run flush with the walls, and the Hearth is of Tyles and is as farr out into the Room at the Ends as before the fire, which is Generally Five foot in the Low'r rooms, and the peice over where the mantle tree should be is made as ours with Joyners work, and as I supose is fasten'd to iron rodds inside. The House where the Vendue[47] was, had Chimney Corners like ours, and they and the hearths were laid with the finest tile that I ever see, and the stair cases laid all with white tile which is ever clean, and so are the walls of the Kitchen which had a Brick floor. They were making Great preparations to Receive their Govenor, Lord Cornbury from the Jerseys, and for that end raised the militia to Gard him on shore to the fort.

They are Generaly of the Church of England and have a New England Gentleman for their minister, and a very fine church set out with all Customary requsites. There are also a Dutch and Divers Conventicles as they call them, viz. Baptist, Quakers, etc. They are not strict in keeping the Sabbath as in Boston and other places where I had bin, But seem to deal with great exactness as farr as I see or Deall with. They are sociable to one another and Curteos and Civill to strangers and fare well in their houses. The English go very fasheonable in their dress. But the Dutch, especially the middling sort, differ from our women, in their habitt[48] go loose, were French muches[49] which are like a Capp and a head band in one, leaving their ears bare, which are sett out with Jewells of a large size and many in number. And their fingers hoop't with Rings, some with large stones in them of many Coullers as were their pendants in their ears, which You should see very old women wear as well as Young.

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[42] accompany

[43] Apparently a local name for some kind of drink.

[44] lean-to

[45] supporting beams

[46] joist(s)

[47] An auction which Mrs. Knight, with Yankee thrift, had just attended.

They have Vendues very frequently and make their Earnings very well by them, for they treat with good Liquor Liberally, and the Customers Drink as Liberally and Generally pay for't as well, by paying for that which they Bidd up Briskly for, after the sack[50] has gone plentifully about, tho' sometimes good penny worths are got there. Their Diversions in the Winter is Riding Sleys about three or four Miles out of Town, where they have Houses of entertainment at a place called the Bowery, and some go to friends Houses who handsomely treat them. Mr. Burroughs carry'd his spouse and Daughter and myself out to one Madame Dowes, a Gentlewoman that lived at a farm House, who gave us a handsome Entertainment of five or six Dishes and choice Beer and metheglin, Cyder, etc., all which she said was the produce of her farm. I believe we mett 50 or 60 slays that day—they fly with great swiftness and some are so furious that they'le turn out of the path for none except a Loaden Cart. Nor do they spare for any diversion the place affords, and sociable to a degree, they'r Tables being as free to their Naybours as to themselves.

Having here transacted the affair I went upon and some other that fell in the way, after about a fortnight's stay there I left New-York with no Little regrett, and Thursday, Dec. 21, set out for New Haven with my Kinsman Trowbridge, and the man that waited on me about one afternoon, and about three come to half-way house about ten miles out of town, where we Baited and went forward, and about 5 come to Spiting Devil, Else[51] Kings bridge, where they pay three pence for passing over with a horse, which the man that keeps the Gate set up at the end of the Bridge receives.

We hoped to reach the french town and Lodg there that night, but unhapily lost our way about four miles short, and being overtaken by a great storm of wind and snow which set full in our faces about dark, we were very uneasy. But meeting one Gardner who lived in a Cottage thereabout, offered us his fire to set by, having but one poor Bedd, and his wife not well, etc., or he would go to a House with us, where he thought we might be better accommodated—thither we went, But a surly old shee Creature, not worthy the name of woman, who would hardly let us go into her Door, though the weather was so stormy none but shee would have turnd out a Dogg. But her son whose name was gallop, who lived Just by Invited us to his house and shewed me two pair of stairs, viz. one up the loft and tother up the Bedd, which was as hard as it was high, and warmed it with a hott stone at the feet. I lay very uncomfortable, insomuch that I was so very cold and sick I was forced to call them up to give me something to warm me. They had nothing but milk in the house, which they Boild, and to make it better sweetened with molasses, which I not knowing or thinking oft till it was down and coming up agen which it did in so plentifull a manner that my host was soon paid double for his portion, and that in specia. But I believe it did me service in Cleering my stomack. So after this sick and weary night at East Chester, (a very miserable poor place,) the weather being now fair, Friday the 22d Dec. we set out for New Rochell, where being come we had good Entertainment and Recruited ourselves very well. This is a very pretty place well compact, and good handsome houses, Clean, good and passable Rodes, and situated on a Navigable River, abundance of land well fined[52] and Cleerd all along as wee passed, which caused in me a Love to the place, which I could have been content to live in it. Here we Ridd over a Bridge made of one entire stone of such a Breadth that a cart might pass with safety, and to spare—it lay over a passage cutt through a Rock to convey water to a mill not farr off. Here are three fine Taverns within call of each other, very good provision for Travailers.

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[48] dress
[49] wear French mutches (*mutch* is Scotch, cap)
[50] A name applied to several sorts of wine.
[51] otherwise
[52] confined, fenced

Thence we travailed through Merrinak, a neet, though little place, with a navigable River before it, one of the pleasantest I ever see—Here were good Buildings, Especially one, a very fine seat, which they told me was Col. Hethcoats, who I had heard was a very fine Gentleman. From hence we come to Hors Neck, where wee Baited, and they told me that one Church of England parson officiated in all these three towns once every Sunday in turns throughout the Year; and that they all could but poorly maintaine him, which they grudg'd to do, being a poor and quarelsome crew as I understand by our Host; their Quarelling about their choice of Minister, they chose to have none—But caused the Government to send this Gentleman to them. Here wee took leave of York Government, and Descending the Mountainos passage that almost broke my heart in ascending before, we come to Stamford, a well compact Town, but miserable meeting house, which we passed, and thro' many and great difficulties, as Bridges which were exceeding high and very tottering and of vast Length, steep and Rocky Hills and precipices, (Buggbears to a fearful female travailer.) About nine at night we come to Norrwalk, having crept over a timber of a Broken Bridge about thirty foot long, and perhaps fifty to the water. I was exceeding tired and cold when we come to our Inn, and could get nothing there but poor entertainment, and the Impertinant Bable of one of the worst of men, among many others of which our Host made one, who, had he bin one degree Impudenter, would have outdone his Grandfather.[53] And this I think is the most perplexed night I have yet had, From hence, Saturday, Dec. 23 a very cold and windy day, after an Intolerable night's Lodging, wee hasted forward only observing in our way the Town to be situated on a Navigable river with indifferent Buildings and people more refind than in some of the Country towns wee had passed, tho' vicious enough, the Church and Tavern being next neighbours. Having Ridd thro a difficult River wee come to Fairfield where wee Baited and were much refreshed as well with the Good things which gratified our appetites as the time took to rest our wearied Limbs, which Latter I employed in enquiring concerning the Town and manners of the people, etc. This is a considerable town, and filld as they say with wealthy people—have a spacious meeting house and good Buildings. But the Inhabitants are Litigious, nor do they well agree with their minister, who (they say) is a very worthy Gentleman. . . .

January 6th. Being now well Recruited and fitt for business I discoursed[54] the persons I was concerned with, that we might finnish in order to my return to Boston. They delayd as they had hitherto done hoping to tire my Patience. But I was resolute to stay and see an End of the matter let it be never so much to my disadvantage—So January 9th they come again and promise the Wednesday following to go through with the distribution of the Estate which they delayed till Thursday and then come with new amusements. But at length by the mediation of that holy good Gentleman, the Rev. Mr. James Pierpont, the minister of New Haven, and with the advice and assistance of other our Good friends we come to an accommodation and distribution, which having finished though not till February, the man that waited on me to York taking the charge of me I sit out for Boston. We went from New Haven upon the ice (the ferry being not passable thereby) and the Rev. Mr. Pierpont with Madam Prout Cuzin Trowbridge and divers others were taking leave wee went onward without anything Remarkabl till wee come to New London and Lodged again at Mr. Saltonstalls—and here I dismist my Guide, and my Generos entertainer provided me Mr. Samuel Rogers of that place to go home with me—I stayed a day here Longer than I intended by the Commands of the Honorable Govenor Winthrop to stay and take a supper with him whose wonderful civility I may not omitt. The next morning I Crossed the Ferry to Groton, having had the Honor of the Company, of Madam Livingston (who is the Govenors Daughter) and Mary Christophers and divers others to the boat—And that night Lodged at Stonington and had Rost Beef and pumpkin sause for supper. The next night at Haven's and had Rost fowle, and the next day wee come to a river which by Reason of The Freshetts coming down was swell'd so high wee feard it impassable and the rapid stream was very terryfying—However we must over and that in a small

[53] the devil (?)

[54] conferred with

Cannoo. Mr. Rogers assuring me of his good Conduct,[55] I after a stay of near an how'r on the shore for consultation went into the Cannoo, and Mr. Rogers paddled about 100 yards up the Creek by the shore side, turned into the swift stream and dexterously steering her in a moment wee come to the other side as swiftly passing as an arrow shott out of the Bow by a strong arm. I staid on the shore till Hee returned to fetch our horses, which he caused to swim over himself bringing the furniture[56] in the Cannoo. But it is past my skill to express the Exceeding fright all their[57] transactions formed in me. Wee were now in the colony of the Massachusetts and taking Lodgings at the first Inn we come too had a pretty difficult passage the next day which was the second of March by reason of the sloughy ways then thawed by the Sunn. Here I mett Capt. John Richards of Boston who was going home, So being very glad of his Company we Rode something harder than hitherto, and missing my way in going up a very steep Hill, my horse dropt down under me as Dead; this new surprize no little hurt me meeting it. Just at the Entrance into Dedham from whence we intended to reach home that night. But was now obliged to gett another Hors there and leave my own, resolving for Boston that night if possible. But in going over the Causeway at Dedham the Bridge being overflowed by the high waters comming down I very narrowly escaped falling over into the river Hors and all which twas almost a miracle I did not—now it grew late in the afternoon and the people having very much discouraged us about the sloughy way which they said wee should find very difficult and hazardous it so wrought on mee being tired and dispirited and disapointed of my desires of going home that I agreed to Lodg there that night which wee did at the house of one Draper, and the next day being March 3d wee got safe home to Boston, where I found my aged and tender mother and my Dear and only Child in good health with open arms redy to receive me, and my kind relations and friends flocking in to welcome mee and hear the story of my transactions and travails I having this day bin five months from home and now I cannot fully express my Joy and Satisfaction. But desire sincearly to adore my Great Benefactor for thus graciously carying forth and returning in safety his unworthy handmaid.

1704-5 1825

SAMUEL SEWALL

From His DIARY[1]

. . . .

Born in Hampshire, England, 1652, died at Boston, 1730. He came with his parents to Massachusetts in 1661, graduated at Harvard, A.B., 1671, A.M., 1674, studied for the ministry, but entered public life, serving at length as chief justice of Massachusetts, 1718-28. As judge in some of the witchcraft trials he admitted evidence which years later he came to consider worthless, and publicly confessed his error. Aside from his *Diary*, Sewall wrote *A Description of the New Heaven*, 1697; *The Selling of Joseph*, 1700; and several other papers. His manuscript writings are very numerous.

October 1, [1720] Saturday. I dine at Mr. Stoddard's: from thence I went to Madam Winthrop's[2] just at three. Spake to her, saying my loving wife died so soon and suddenly, 'twas hardly convenient[3] for me to think of marrying again; however I came to this resolution, that I would not make my court to any person without first consulting with her. Had a pleasant discourse about seven single persons sitting in the fore-seat[4] September 29th, viz. Madam Rebekah Dudley, Catharine Winthrop,[5] Bridget Usher, Deliverance Legg, Rebekah Loyd, Lydia Colman, Elizabeth Bellingham. She propounded one and another for me; but none would do; said Mrs. Loyd was about her age.

October 3. 2. Waited on Madam Winthrop again; 'twas a little while before she came in. Her daughter Noyes being there alone with me, I said I hoped my waiting on her mother would not be disagreeable to her. She answered she should not be against that that might be for her comfort.[6] . . .

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[55] skill, dexterity

[56] saddles and other equipment

[57] Probably *these* in the original MS.

[1] Sewall's diary, kept in a diary-writing age when the record of passing events in print was only beginning, has given the author the title of the American Pepys. Beginning in 1673 and running till 1729, it gives some pictures of colonial life, especially that of the official and better born society, that can nowhere be excelled for their vividness.

[2] Madam Winthrop, who was the mother of twelve children, most of whom died young, was now a second time a widow, and in her fifty-seventh year. Her second husband was Wait Still Winthrop, grandson of the first governor. Judge Sewall's second wife had been dead a little more than four months.

[3] suitable

[4] The front seat of the church was reserved for persons of social rank. Sometimes a place there was voted by the church to a person it wished to honor.

[5] Madam Winthrop

[6] happiness

By and by in came Mr. Airs, Chaplain of the Castle,[7] and hanged up his hat, which I was a little startled at, it seeming as if he was to lodge there. At last Madam Winthrop came too. After a considerable time, I went up to her and said, if it might not be inconvenient I desired to speak with her. She assented, and spake of going into another room; but Mr. Airs and Mrs. Noyes presently[8] rose up, and went out, leaving us there alone. Then I ushered in discourse from the names in the fore-seat; at last I prayed that Katharine [Mrs. Winthrop] might be the person assigned for me. She instantly took it up in the way of denial, as if she had catched at an opportunity to do it, saying she could not do it before she was asked. Said that was her mind unless she should change it, which she believed she should not; could not leave her children. I expressed my sorrow that she should do it so speedily, prayed her consideration, and asked her when I should wait on her again. She setting no time, I mentioned that day sennight. Gave her Mr. Willard's *Fountain Opened*[9] with the little print and verses, saying I hoped, if we did well read that book, we should meet together hereafter, if we did not now. She took the book, and put it in her pocket. Took leave.

October 5. Midweek, I dined with the Court.[10] . . . Although I had appointed to wait upon her, M^{m} Winthrop, next Monday, yet I went from my Cousin Sewall's thither about three P. M. The nurse told me Madam dined abroad at her daughter Noyes's; they were to go out together. I asked for the maid, who was not within. Gave Katee a penny and a kiss, and came away. Accompanied my son and daughter Cooper in their remove to their new house. Went to tell Joseph,[11] and Mr. Belcher saw me by the South Meetinghouse[12] though 'twas duskish, and said I had been at house-warming[13] (he had been at our house). Invited me to drink a glass of wine at his house at seven and eat part of the pasty provided for the Commissioners' voyage to Casco-Bay. His Excellency, Madam Belcher, S. S.[14] Col. Fitch, Mr. D. Oliver, Mr. Anthony Stoddard, Mr. Welsteed, Mr. White, Mr. Belcher sat down. At coming home gave us of the cake and ginger-bread to carry away. 'Twas about ten before we got home; Mr. Oliver and I waited on the Governor to his gate; and then Mr. Oliver would wait on me home.

October 6. Lecture-day; Mr. Cutler,[15] president of the Connecticut college,[16] preached in Dr. C. Mather's turn. He made an excellent discourse from *Heb.* 11, 14, "For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country." Brother Odlin, Son Sewall of Brookline, and Mary Hirst dine with me. I asked Mary of Madam Lord, Mr. Oliver and wife, and bid her present my service to them.

October 6th. A little after six p.m. I went to Madam Winthrop's. She was not within. I gave Sarah Chickering, the maid, two shillings, Juno,[17] who brought in wood, one shilling. Afterward the nurse came in, I gave her eighteen pence, having no other small bill. After awhile Dr. Noyes came in with his mother; and quickly after his wife came in. They sat talking, I think, till eight o'clock. I said I feared I might be some interruption to their business. Dr. Noyes replied pleasantly, he feared they might be an interruption to me, and went away. Madam seemed to harp upon the same string. Must take care of her children; could not leave that house and neighborhood where she had dwelt so long. I told her she might do her children as much or more good by bestowing what she laid out in house-keeping, upon them. Said her son would be of age the 7th of August. I said it might be inconvenient for her to dwell with her daughter-in-law, who must be mistress of the house. I gave her a piece of Mr. Belcher's cake and ginger-bread wrapped up in a clean sheet of paper; told her of her father's kindness to me when treasurer, and I constable. My daughter Judith was gone from me and I was more lonesome—might help to forward one another in our journey to Canaan.[18]—Mr. Eyre came within the door; I saluted him, asked how Mr. Clark did, and he went away. I took leave about nine o'clock. I told [her] I came now to refresh her memory as to Monday night; said she had not forgot it. In discourse with her, I asked leave to speak with her sister; I meant to gain Madam Mico's[19] favor to persuade her sister. She seemed surprised and displeased, and said she was in the same condition![20]

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[7] Chaplain of the garrison at the Castle, the fortification on Castle Island in the harbor.

[8] at once

[9] A sermon entitled *The Fountain Opened* by Samuel Willard, Judge Sewall's former pastor, then dead.

[10] Members of the Court (Sewall was now chief justice of Massachusetts) were wont to dine together occasionally at a public house.

[11] One of his sons who would be interested in the sister's moving into the new house.

[12] The original Old South Church on the site of the present, Washington and Milk Streets.

[13] Festivities attending the opening of the new house.

[14] Samuel Sewall

[15] Timothy Cutler, 1684-1765, President of Yale College, 1719-1722.

[16] Yale College

[17] Probably a negro slave.

[18] Heaven. In reference to the journey of the Israelites from Egypt to the land of Canaan.

. . . .

October 10. . . . In the evening I visited Madam Winthrop, who treated me with a great deal of courtesy; wine, marmalade. I gave her a *News-Letter* about the Thanksgiving;[21] proposals, for sake of the verses for David Jeffries.[22] She tells me Dr. Increase Mather visited her this day, in Mr. Hutchinson's coach.

It seems Dr. Cotton Mather's chimney fell afire yesterday, so as to interrupt the assembly, A.M. Mr. Cutler ceased preaching a quarter of an hour.

October 11th. I writ a few lines to Madam Winthrop to this purpose: "Madam, these wait on you with Mr. Mayhew's *Sermon,* and *Account of the State of the Indians on Martha's Vineyard.* I thank you for your unmerited favors of yesterday; and hope to have the happiness of waiting on you tomorrow before eight o'clock after noon. I pray God to keep you, and give you a joyful entrance upon the two hundred and twenty-ninth year of Christopher Columbus his[23] discovery; and take leave, who am, madam, your humble servant, S. S."

Sent this by Deacon Green, who delivered it to Sarah Chickering, her mistress not being at home.

October 12th. . . . Mrs. Anne Cotton came to [the] door ('twas before eight) said Madam Winthrop was within, directed me into the little room, where she was full of work behind a stand; Mrs. Cotton came in and stood. Madam Winthrop pointed to her to set me a chair. Madam Winthrop's countenance was much changed from what 'twas on Monday,—looked dark and lowering. At last, the work, (black stuff or silk) was taken away, I got my chair in place, had some converse, but very cold and indifferent to what 'twas before. Asked her to acquit me of rudeness if I drew off her glove. Inquiring the reason, I told her twas great odds between handling a dead goat, and a living lady. Got it off. I told her I had one petition to ask of her, that was, that she would take off the negative she laid on me the third of October; She readily answered she could not, and enlarged upon it; She told me of it so soon as she could; could not leave her house, children, neighbors, business. I told her she might do some good to help and support me. Mentioning Mrs. Gookin, Nath.,[24] the widow Weld was spoken of; said I had visited Mrs. Denison. I told her Yes! Afterward I said, If after a first and second vagary[25] she would accept of me returning, her victorious kindness and good will would be very obliging. She thanked me for my book, (Mr. Mayhew's *Sermon*), But said not a word of the letter. When she insisted on the negative, I prayed there might be no more thunder and lightning: I should not sleep all night. I gave her Dr. Preston, *The Church's Marriage and the Church's Carriage,* which cost me six shillings at the sale. The door standing open, Mr. Airs came in, hung up his hat, and sat down. After awhile, Madam Winthrop moving, he went out. Jno. Eyre looked in, I said How do ye, or Your servant, Mr. Eyre; but heard no word from him. Sarah filled a glass of wine, she drank to me, I to her. She sent Juno home with me with a good lantern; I gave her sixpence and bid her thank her mistress. In some of our discourse, I told her I had rather go to the stone-house adjoining to her,[26] than to come to her against her mind. Told her the reason why I came every other night was lest I should drink too deep draughts of pleasure. She had talked of canary; her kisses were to me better than the best canary. Explained the expression concerning Columbus. . . .

October 19. Midweek, visited Madam Winthrop; Sarah told me she was at Mr. Walley's, would not come home till late. I gave her Hannah three oranges with her duty,[27] not knowing whether I should find her or no. Was ready to go home; but said if I knew she was there, I would go thither. Sarah seemed to speak with pretty good courage, she would be there. I went and found her there, with Mr. Walley and his wife in the little room below. At 7 o'clock I mentioned going home; at 8, I put on my coat, and quickly waited on her home. She found occasion to speak loud to the servant, as if she had a mind to be known. Was courteous to me; but took occasion to speak pretty earnestly about my keeping a coach: I said 'twould cost £100. per annum: she said 'twould cost but £40. Spake much against John Winthrop,[28] his false-heartedness. Mr. Eyre came in and sat awhile; I offered him Dr. Incr. Mather's Sermons, whereof Mr. Appleton's Ordination Sermon was one; said he had them already. I said I would give him another. Exit. Came away somewhat late.

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[19] Madam Winthrop's sister

[20] state of mind (concerning the marriage)

[21] The *Boston News-Letter* founded 1704. This number perhaps contained notice of the Thanksgiving which was held that year on October 27.

[22] Perhaps refers to some proposed printing of memorial verses for David Jeffries, Madam Winthrop's son-in-law, drowned at sea four years before.

[23] Columbus's

[24] Probably Mrs. Nathaniel Gookin.

[25] The Judge was not paying attention to Madam Winthrop alone.

[26] The prison; this identifies the site of Madam Winthrop's house with that of the old Court House on Court St.

[27] compliments (apparently to Hannah's mistress)

October 20. Mr. Colman preaches from *Luke* 15. 10. Joy among the Angels: made an excellent discourse.

At Council, Col. Townsend spake to me of my hood: should get a wig. I said 'twas my chief ornament: I wore it for sake of the day. Brother Odlin, and Sam, Mary, and Jane Hirst dine with us. Promised to wait on the Governor about seven. Madam Winthrop not being at lecture, I went thither first; found her very serene with her daughter Noyes, Mrs. Dering, and the widow Shipreev sitting at a little table, she in her armed chair. She drank to me; and I to Mrs. Noyes. After awhile prayed the favor to speak with her. She took one of the candles, and went into the best room, closed the shutters, sat down upon the couch. She told me Madam Usher had been there, and said the coach must be set on wheels,[29] and not by rusting. She spake something of my needing a wig. Asked me what her sister said to me. I told her, She said, if her sister were for it, she would not hinder it. But I told her, she[30] did not say she would be glad to have me for her brother. Said, I shall keep you in the cold, and asked her if she would be within tomorrow night, for we had had but a running feat.[31] She said she could not tell whether she should, or no. I took leave. As were drinking at the Governor's, he said: In England the ladies minded little more than that they might have money, and coaches to ride in. I said, And New England brooks[32] its name. At which Mr. Dudley smiled. Governor said they were not quite so bad here.

October 21. Friday, my son, the minister, came to me P.M. by appointment and we pray for one another in the old chamber; more especially respecting my courtship. About 6 o'clock I go to Madam Winthrop's; Sarah told me her mistress was gone out, but did not tell me whither she went. She presently ordered me a fire; so I went in, having Dr. Sibb's *Bowels*[33] with me to read. I read the two first sermons, still nobody came in: at last about 9 o'clock Mr. Jno. Eyre came in; I took the opportunity to say to him as I had done to Mrs. Noyes before, that I hoped my visiting his mother would not be disagreeable to him; he answered me with much respect. When 'twas after nine o'clock he of himself said he would go and call her, she was but at one of his brothers: awhile after I heard Madam Winthrop's voice, inquiring something about John. After a good while and clapping the garden door twice or thrice, she came in. I mentioned something of the lateness; she bantered me, and said I was later. She received me courteously. I asked when our proceedings should be made public. She said they were like to be no more public than they were already. Offered me no wine that I remember. I rose up at eleven o'clock to come away, saying I would put on my coat, She offered not to help me. I prayed her that Juno might light me home; she opened the shutter, and said 'twas pretty light abroad; Juno was weary and gone to bed. So I came home by star-light as well as I could. At my first coming in, I gave Sarah five shillings. I writ Mr. Eyre his name in his book with the date October 21, 1720. It cost me eight shillings. Jehovah jireh![34] Madam told me she had visited M. Mico, Wendell, and Wm. Clark of the South [Church].

October 22. Daughter Cooper visited me before my going out of town; stayed till about sunset. I brought her going near as far as the Orange Tree.[35] Coming back, near Leg's Corner, little David Jeffries saw me, and looking upon me very lovingly, asked me if I was going to see his grandmother? I said, Not tonight. Gave him a penny, and bid him present my service to his grandmother.

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[28] Stepson of Madam Winthrop. Apparently there had not been cordial feeling between them concerning the settlement of the Winthrop estate.

[29] used, not set by to rust

[30] Madam Mico

[31] A vague, neutral word meaning act, deed. Here, they had had but a hurried talk, not a deliberate conversation.

[32] bears appropriately

[33] The full title is *Bowels Opened; or A Discovery of the Union between Christ and the Church* by Dr. Sibb, a popular English Puritan minister of the time.

[34] *Genesis* xx. 14. The Lord will provide.

[35] A tavern.

October 24. I went in the hackney coach through the common, stopped at Madam Winthrop's (had told her I would take my departure from thence). Sarah came to the door with Katee in her arms: but I did not think to take notice of the child. Called her mistress. I told her, being encouraged by David Jeffries' loving eyes, and sweet words, I was come to inquire whether she could find in her heart to leave that house and neighborhood, and go and dwell with me at the South-end; I think she said softly, Not yet. I told her it did not lie in my lands to keep a coach. If I should, I should be in danger to be brought to keep company with her Neighbor Brooker, (he was a little before sent to prison for debt). Told her I had an antipathy against those who would pretend to give themselves, but nothing of their estate. I would[36] a proportion of my estate with myself. And I supposed she would do so. As to a periwig, my best and greatest Friend, I could not possibly have a greater, began to find me with hair before I was born, and had continued to do so ever since; and I could not find in my heart to go to another. She commended the book I gave her, Dr. Preston, *The Church's Marriage;* quoted him saying 'twas inconvenient keeping out of a fashion commonly used.[37] I said the time and tide did circumscribe my visit. She gave me a dram of black-cherry brandy, and gave me a lump of the sugar that was in it. She wished me a good journey. I prayed God to keep her, and came away. Had a very pleasant journey to Salem. . . . . . .

November 2. Midweek, went again, and found Mrs. Alden there, who quickly went out. Gave her about a half pound of sugar almonds, cost three shillings per pound. Carried them on Monday. She seemed pleased with them, asked what they cost. Spake of giving her a hundred pounds per annum if I died before her. Asked her what sum she would give me, if she should die first? Said I would give her time to consider of it. She said she heard as if I had given all to my children by deeds of gift. I told her 'twas a mistake; Point-Judith was mine, etc. That in England, I owned, my father's desire was that it should go to my eldest son; 'twas £20 per annum; she thought 'twas forty. I think when I seem'd to excuse pressing this, she seemed to think 'twas best to speak of it; a long winter was coming on. Gave me a glass or two of canary.

Nov. 4. Friday. Went again about seven o'clock; found there Mr. John Walley and his wife: sat discoursing pleasantly. I showed them Isaac Moses's[38] writing. Madam W. served comfeits[39] to us. After awhile a table was spread, and supper was set. I urged Mr. Walley to crave a blessing; but he put it upon me. About nine they went away. I asked Madam what fashioned necklace I should present her with. She said, None at all. I asked here whereabout we left off last time; mentioned what I had offered to give her; asked her what she would give me; she said she could not change her condition; she had said so from the beginning; could not be so far from her children, the lecture.[40] Quoted the Apostle Paul affirming that a single life was better than a married. I answered, That was for the present distress.[41] She said she had not pleasure in things of that nature as formerly: I said, you are the fitter to make me a wife. If she held in that mind, I must go home and bewail my rashness in making more haste than good speed. However, considering the supper, I desired her to be within next Monday night, if we lived so long. Assented. She charged me with saying that she must put away Juno, if she came to me: I utterly denied it, it never came in my heart; yet she insisted upon it; saying it came in upon discourse about the Indian woman that obtained her freedom this court. About ten I said I would not disturb the good orders of her house, and came away. She not seeming pleased with my coming away. Spake to her about David Jeffries, had not seen him.

Monday, November 7th. My son prayed in the old chamber. Our time had been taken up by Son and Daughter Cooper's visit; so that I only read the 130th and 143d Psalm. 'Twas on account of my courtship. I went to Mad. Winthrop; found her rocking her little Katee in the cradle. I excused my coming so late (near eight). She set me an armed chair and cushion; and so the cradle was between her armed chair and mine. Gave her the remnant of my almonds; She did not eat of them as before; but laid them away; I said I came to inquire whether she had altered her mind since Friday, or remained of the same mind still. She said, Thereabouts. I told her I loved her, and was so fond as to think that she loved me: she said had a great respect for me. I told her, I had made her an offer, without asking any advice; she had so many to advise with, that 'twas a hindrance. The fire was come to one short brand besides the block, which brand was set up in end; at last it fell to pieces, and no recruit was made: she gave me a glass of wine. I think I repeated again that I would go home and bewail my rashness in making more haste than good speed. I would endeavor to contain myself, and not go on to solicit her to do that which she could not consent to. Took leave of her. As came down the steps she bid me have a care. Treated me courteously. Told her she had entered the fourth year of her widowhood. I had given her the *News-Letter* before: I did not bid her draw off her glove as sometime I had done. Her dress was not so clean as sometime it had been.[42] Jehovah jireh!

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[36] would [give]

[37] The Judge was opposed throughout his life to wearing wigs.

[38] An Indian.

[39] preserves (often candied fruits)

[40] The midweek lecture was delivered on Thursday afternoon. The sermon differed little from that of Sunday, but if anything was less formal.

[41] 1 *Corinthians* vii. 26.

Midweek, November 9th. Dine at Brother Stoddard's: were so kind as to inquire of me if they should invite Madam Winthrop; I answered No. Thanked my Sister Stoddard for her courtesy; sat down at the table Simeon Stoddard, Esqr., Madam Stoddard, Samuel Sewall, Mr. Colman, Madam Colman, Mr. Cooper, Mrs. Cooper, Mrs. Hannah Cooper, Mr. Samuel Sewall of Brookline, Mrs. Sewall, Mr. Joseph Sewall, Mrs. Lydia Walley, Mr. William Stoddard. Had a noble treat. At night our meeting was at the Widow Belknap's. Gave each one of the meeting one of Mr. Homes's sermons, 12 in all; she sent her servant home with me with a lantern. Madam Winthrop's shutters were open as I passed by.

. . . .

About the middle of December Madam Winthrop made a treat for her children; Mr. Sewall, Prince, Willoughby: I knew nothing of it; but the same day abode in the council chamber for fear of the rain, and dined alone upon Kilby's pies and good beer.[43]

1673-1729 1882

COLONEL WILLIAM BYRD

Born at Westover, Virginia, 1674, died there, 1744. The son of a man of great estate, Byrd was educated in London, was admitted to the English bar in the Middle Temple, traveled and studied on the continent, receiving all the advantages then afforded a person of good birth and wealth. He was a member of the Royal Society and contributed a few papers. His life was spent in Virginia as a public official and man of affairs. He founded the cities of Petersburg and Richmond, and extended his estate until it reached some 180,000 acres. His manuscripts, all of them descriptive of the country, *History of the Dividing Line, A Journey to the Land of Eden,* and *A Progress to the Mines,* were published in 1841.

From HISTORY OF THE DIVIDING LINE[1]

. . . .

March 12, [1728]. . . . Our landlord[2] had a tolerable good house and clean furniture, and yet we could not be tempted to lodge in it. We chose rather to lie in the open field, for fear of growing too tender. A clear sky, spangled with stars, was our canopy which, being the last thing we saw before we fell asleep, gave us magnificent dreams. The truth of it is, we took so much pleasure in that natural kind of lodging that I think at the foot of the account mankind are great losers by the luxury of feather-beds and warm apartments.

The curiosity of beholding so new and withal so sweet a method of encamping, brought one of the senators of North Carolina to make us a midnight visit. But he was so very clamorous in his commendations of it that the sentinel, not seeing his quality,[3] either through his habit or behavior, had like to have treated him roughly.

After excusing the unseasonableness of his visit, and letting us know he was a Parliament man,[4] he swore he was so taken with our lodging that he would set fire to his house as soon as he got home, and teach his wife and children to lie, like us, in the open field.

March 13. Early this morning our chaplain repaired to us with the men we had left at Mr. Wilson's. We had sent for them the evening before to relieve those who had the labor-oar[5] from Corotuck Inlet. But to our great surprise they petitioned not to be relieved, hoping to gain immortal reputation by being the first of mankind that ventured through the great Dismal.[6] But the rest being equally ambitious of the same honor, it was but fair to decide their pretensions by lot. After fortune had declared herself, those which she had excluded offered money to the happy persons to go in their stead. But Hercules would have as soon sold the glory of cleansing the Augean stables,[7] which was pretty near the same sort of work.

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[42] Other passages, not here quoted, make the meaning clear. She did not dress herself so carefully for his calling as she had sometimes done.

[43] Judge Sewall married Mrs. Mary Gibbs Mar. 29, 1722.

[1] Dispute having arisen between Virginia and Carolina concerning the line dividing the two colonies, commissioners from both sides, of whom Byrd was one, were appointed to accompany and oversee the actual work of the surveyors who ran the line 241 miles west from the sea, fixing its location permanently. This part of the diary records Byrd's experiences in executing the commission.

[2] The line had been started from the coast on March 7. The party was now camping at a planter's house some miles inland.

[3] official or social rank

[4] The colonial legislator, apparently tipsy, assumed the title usually applied to a member of the British Parliament.

No sooner was the controversy at an end, but we sent them, unfortunate fellows, back to their quarters, whom chance had condemned to remain upon firm land and sleep in a whole skin. In the mean while the surveyors carried the line three miles, which was no contemptible day's work, considering how cruelly they were entangled with briars and gall bushes. The leaf of this last shrub bespeaks it to be of the *Alaternus* family.

Our work ended within a quarter of a mile of the Dismal above-mentioned, where the ground began to be already full of sunken holes and slashes, which had, here and there, some few reeds growing in them.

'Tis hardly credible how little the bordering inhabitants were acquainted with this mighty swamp, notwithstanding they had lived their whole lives within smell of it. Yet, as great strangers as they were to it, they pretended to be very exact in their account of its dimensions, and were positive it could not be above seven or eight miles wide, but knew no more of the matter than star-gazers know of the distance of the fixed stars. At the same time, they were simple enough to amuse our men with idle stories of the lions, panthers, and alligators they were like to encounter in that dreadful place.

In short, we saw plainly there was no intelligence of this *terra incognita*[8] to be got, but from our own experience. For that reason it was resolved to make the requisite dispositions to enter it next morning. We allotted every one of the surveyors for this painful enterprise with twelve men to attend them. Fewer than that could not be employed in clearing the way, carrying the chain, marking the trees, and bearing the necessary bedding and provisions. Nor would the commissioners themselves have spared their persons on this occasion, but for fear of adding to the poor men's burthen, while they were certain they could add nothing to their resolution. . . . . .

March 14. Before nine of the clock this morning, the provisions, bedding, and other necessaries, were made up into packs for the men to carry on their shoulders into the Dismal. They were victualed for eight days at full allowance, nobody doubting but that would be abundantly sufficient to carry them through that inhospitable place; nor indeed was it possible for the poor fellows to stagger under more. As it was, their loads weighed from 60 to 70 pounds, in just proportion to the strength of those who were to bear them.

'Twould have been unconscionable to have saddled them with burthens heavier than that, when they were to lug them through a filthy bog which was hardly practicable with no burthen at all. Besides this luggage at their backs, they were obliged to measure the distance, mark the trees, and clear the way for the surveyors every step they went. It was really a pleasure to see with how much cheerfulness they undertook, and with how much spirit they went through all this drudgery. For their greater safety, the commissioners took care to furnish them with Peruvian bark, rhubarb, and hipocoacanah,[9] in case they might happen, in that wet journey, to be taken with fevers or fluxes.

Although there was no need of example to inflame persons already so cheerful, yet, to enter the people with better grace, the author and two more of the commissioners accompanied them half a mile into the Dismal. The skirts of it were thinly planted with dwarf reeds and gall-bushes but, when we got into the Dismal itself, we found the reeds grew there much taller and closer and, to mend the matter, was so interlaced with bamboo-briars that there was no scuffling through them without the help of pioneers. At the same time, we found the ground moist and trembling under our feet like a quagmire, insomuch that it was an easy matter to run a ten-foot pole up to the head in it, without exerting any uncommon strength to do it.

Two of the men, whose burthens were the least cumbersome, had orders to march before with their tomahawks and clear the way, in order to make an opening for the

[5] brunt of the work

[6] Dismal Swamp. See any map.

[7] One of the twelve labors of Hercules was to cleanse the stables of King Augeas where three thousand oxen had been stalled for thirty years.

[8] unknown land

[9] ipecacuanha

surveyors. By their assistance we made a shift to push the line half a mile in three hours, and then reached a small piece of firm land about 100 yards wide standing up above the rest like an island. Here the people were glad to lay down their loads and take a little refreshment, while the happy man whose lot it was to carry the jug of rum began already, like Aesop's bread-carriers,[10] to find it grow a good deal lighter.

After reposing about an hour, the commissioners recommended vigor and constancy to their fellow-travelers, by whom they were answered with three cheerful huzzas in token of obedience. This ceremony was no sooner over but they took up their burthens and attended the motion of the surveyors who, though they worked with all their might, could reach but one mile farther, the same obstacles still attending them which they had met with in the morning.

However small this distance may seem to such as are used to travel at their ease, yet our poor men, who were obliged to work with an unwieldy load at their backs, had reason to think it a long way; especially in a bog where they had no firm footing, but every step made a deep impression, which was instantly filled with water. At the same time they were laboring with their hands to cut down the reeds, which were ten feet high, their legs were hampered with the briars. Besides, the weather happened to be very warm, and the tallness of the reeds kept off every friendly breeze from coming to refresh them. And, indeed, it was a little provoking to hear the wind whistling among the branches of the white cedars, which grew here and there amongst the reeds, and at the same time not have the comfort to feel the least breath of it.

In the mean time the three commissioners returned out of the Dismal the same way they went in and, having joined their brethren, proceeded that night as far as Mr. Wilson's.

This worthy person lives within sight of the Dismal, in the skirts whereof his stocks range and maintain themselves all the winter, and yet he knew as little of it as he did of *Terra Australis Incognita.*[11] He told us a Canterbury tale[12] of a North Briton whose curiosity spurred him a long way into this great desert, as he called it, near 20 years ago, but he having no compass, nor seeing the sun for several days together, wandered about till he was almost famished; but at last he bethought himself of a secret his countrymen make use of to pilot themselves in a dark day.

He took a fat louse out of his collar and exposed it to the open day on a piece of white paper which he brought along with him for his journal. The poor insect, having no eye-lids, turned himself about till he found the darkest part of the heavens, and so made the best of his way towards the north. By this direction he steered himself safe out, and gave such a frightful account of the monsters he saw and the distresses he underwent, that no mortal since has been hardy enough to go upon the like dangerous discovery.

March 15. The surveyors pursued their work with all diligence, but still found the soil of the Dismal so spongy that the water oozed up into every footstep they took. To their sorrow, too, they found the reeds and briars more firmly interwoven than they did the day before. But the greatest grievance was from large cypresses which the wind had blown down and heaped upon one another. On the limbs of most of them grew sharp snags, pointing every way like so many pikes, that required much pains and caution to avoid.

. . . .

March 25. . . . In the mean time, we who stayed behind had nothing to do but to make the best observations we could upon that part of the country. The soil of our landlord's plantation, though none of the best, seemed more fertile than any thereabouts, where the ground is near as sandy as the deserts of Africa, and consequently barren. The road leading from thence to Edenton, being in distance about 27 miles, lies upon a ridge called Sandy Ridge, which is so wretchedly poor that it will not bring potatoes.

The pines in this part of the country are of a different species from those that grow in Virginia: their bearded leaves are much longer and their cones much larger. Each cell contains a seed of the size and figure of a black-eyed pea, which, shedding in

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[10] Æsop on asking for the lightest burden, and on being told to choose, chose the bread, the heaviest of all. He was laughed at. But at dinner he distributed to his fellow-servants half the bread, and at supper the remainder. During the rest of the journey Æsop carried only the empty basket.

[11] unknown southern land

[12] cock-and-bull story; a humorous tale, like Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.* This tale and another following show Byrd's fashionable London dislike of the Scotch.

November, is very good mast for hogs, and fattens them in a short time.

The smallest of these pines are full of cones, which are eight or nine inches long, and each affords commonly 60 or 70 seeds. This kind of mast has the advantage of all other by being more constant, and less liable to be nipped by the frost or eaten by the caterpillars. The trees also abound more with turpentine, and consequently yield more tar than either the yellow or the white pine; and for the same reason make more durable timber for building. The inhabitants hereabouts pick up knots of lightwood in abundance, which they burn into tar, and then carry it to Norfolk or Nansimond for a market. The tar made in this method is the less valuable because it is said to burn the cordage, though it is full as good for all other uses as that made in Sweden and Muscovy.

Surely there is no place in the world where the inhabitants live with less labor than in North Carolina. It approaches nearer to the description of Lubberland[13] than any other, by the great felicity of the climate, the easiness of raising provisions, and the slothfulness of the people.

Indian corn is of so great increase that a little pains will subsist a very large family with bread, and then they may have meat without any pains at all, by the help of the low grounds, and the great variety of mast that grows on the high-land. The men for their parts, just like the Indians, impose all the work upon the poor women. They make their wives rise out of their beds early in the morning, at the same time that they lie and snore till the sun has run one third of his course and dispersed all the unwholesome damps. Then, after stretching and yawning for half an hour, they light their pipes, and, under the protection of a cloud of smoke, venture out into the open air; though, if it happens to be never so little cold, they quickly return shivering into the chimney corner. When the weather is mild, they stand leaning with both their arms upon the corn-field fence, and gravely consider whether they had best go and take a small heat at the hoe: but generally find reasons to put it off till another time.

Thus they loiter away their lives, like Solomon's sluggard,[14] with their arms across, and at the winding up of the year scarcely have bread to eat.

To speak the truth, 'tis a thorough aversion to labor that makes people file off to North Carolina, where plenty and a warm sun confirm them in their disposition to laziness for their whole lives.

March 26. Since we were like to be confined to this place till the people returned out of the Dismal, 'twas agreed that our chaplain might safely take a turn to Edenton to preach the gospel to the infidels there, and christen their children. He was accompanied thither by Mr. Little, one of the Carolina commissioners, who, to show his regard for the church, offered to treat him on the road with a fricassee of rum. They fried half a dozen rashers of very fat bacon in a pint of rum both which, being dished up together, served the company at once for meat and drink.

Most of the rum they get in this country comes from New England and is so bad and unwholesome that it is not improperly called "kill-devil". It is distilled there from foreign molasses which, if skilfully managed, yields near gallon for gallon. Their molasses comes from the same country, and has the name of "long sugar" in Carolina, I suppose from the ropiness of it, and serves all the purposes of sugar both in their eating and drinking.

When they entertain their friends bountifully, they fail not to set before them a capacious bowl of Bombo,[15] so called from the admiral of that name. This is a compound of rum and water in equal parts, made palatable with the said long sugar. As good humor begins to flow and the bowl to ebb, they take care to replenish it with sheer rum, of which there always is a reserve under the table. But such generous doings happen only when that balsam of life is plenty; for they have often such melancholy times that neither Land-graves nor Cassicks[16] can procure one drop for their wives when they lie in, or are troubled with the colic or vapors. Very few in this country have the industry to plant orchards which, in a dearth of rum, might supply them with much better liquor.

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[13] A general colloquial term for a sluggard's paradise. Local colonial jealousies caused much ill blood and even serious political danger till long after the Revolution.

[14] *Proverbs* xix. 24.

[15] According to Tobias Smollett, in *Roderick Random*, the liquor is made of rum, sugar, water, and nutmeg. Compare the amusing and important part "Kill-devil Bombo" plays in Owen Wister's *Lady Baltimore*.

[16] Officials of the upper house of the Carolina legislature, and landed proprietors, held these titles of aristocracy as provided by the constitution formed for the colony by John Locke. The separation between the Carolinas was not made till the year following this diary.

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October 8 [1728][17] . . . We quartered near a spring of very fine water, soft as oil and as cold as ice, to make us amends for the want of wine. And our Indian knocked down a very fat doe, just time enough to hinder us from going supperless to bed.

The heavy baggage could not come up with us because of the excessive badness of the ways. This gave us no small uneasiness, but it went worse with the poor men that guarded it. They had nothing in the world with them but dry bread, nor durst they eat any of that for fear of inflaming their thirst in a place where they could find no water to quench it.

This was, however, the better to be endured, because it was the first fast any one had kept during the whole journey, and then, thanks to the gracious Guardian of the woods there was no more than a single meal lost to a few of the company.

We were entertained this night with the yell of a whole family of wolves in which we could distinguish the treble, tenor and bass, very clearly. These beasts of prey kept pretty much upon our track, being tempted by the garbage of the creatures we killed every day; for which we were serenaded with their shrill pipes almost every night. This beast is not so untamable as the panther, but the Indians know how to gentle their whelps, and use them about their cabins instead of dogs.

October 9. The thickets were hereabouts so impenetrable that we were obliged, at first setting off this morning, to order four pioneers to clear the way before the surveyors. But after about two miles of these rough woods, we had the pleasure to meet with open grounds and not very uneven, by the help of which we were enabled to push the line about 6 miles.

The baggage that lay short of our camp last night came up about noon, and the men made heavy complaints that they had been half starved, like Tantalus,[18] in the midst of plenty, for the reason above mentioned.

The soil we passed over this day was generally very good, being clothed with large trees of poplar, hickory, and oak. But another certain token of its fertility was that wild angelica grew plentifully upon it.

The root of this plant being very warm and aromatic, is coveted by woodsmen extremely as a dry dram, that is, when rum, that cordial for all distresses, is wanting.

Several deer came into our view as we marched along, but none into the pot, which made it necessary for us to sup on the fragments we had been so provident as to carry along with us. This, being but a temperate repast, made some of our hungry fellows call the place we lodged at that night Bread and Water Camp.

A great flock of cranes flew over our quarters that were exceeding clamorous in their flight. They seem to steer their course towards the south, (being birds of passage) in quest of warmer weather. They only took this country in their way, being as rarely met with, in this part of the world, as a highwayman or a beggar.

These birds travel generally in flocks, and when they roost they place sentinels upon some of the highest trees, which constantly stand upon one leg to keep themselves waking.

Our Indian killed nothing all day but a mountain partridge, which a little resembled the common partridge in the plumage, but was near as large as a dunghill hen. These are very frequent towards the mountains, though we had the fortune to meet with very few. They are apt to be shy, and consequently the noise of so great a number of people might easily scare them away from our sight.

We found what we conceived to be good limestone in several places, and a great quantity of blue slate.

October 10. The day began very fortunately by killing a fat doe, and two brace of wild turkeys; so the plenty of the morning made amends for the short commons over night. One of the new men we brought out with us the last time was unfortunately heard to wish himself at home and, for that show of impatience, was publicly reprimanded at the head of the men, who were all drawn up to witness his disgrace.

He was asked how he came so soon to be tired of the company of so many brave fellows, and whether it was the danger or fatigue of the journey that disheartened him? This public reproof from thenceforward put an effectual stop to all complaints, and not a man amongst us after that pretended so much as to wish himself in paradise.

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[17] After about six weeks' work, "because the rattle-snakes began to crawl out of their winter quarters, and might grow dangerous to the men and their horses, it was determined to proceed no further with the line till fall." The work was resumed in September, and by October 8, had reached high, rolling ground.

[18] Tantalus, in Hades, was tormented with hunger and thirst, but as often as he stooped to drink, the water fled from him, and as often as he reached for the fruits growing just above his head, the winds blew the branches away.

A small distance from our camp we crossed a pleasant stream of water called Cocquade Creek, and something more than a mile from thence our line intersected the south branch of Roanoke River the first time, which we called the Dan. It was about 200 yards wide where we forded it and, when we came over to the west side, we found the banks lined with a forest of tall canes that grew more than a furlong in depth. So that it cost us abundance of time and labor to cut a passage through them wide enough for our baggage.

In the mean time we had leisure to take a full view of this charming river. The stream, which was perfectly clear, ran down about two knots or two miles, an hour, when the water was at the lowest. The bottom was covered with a coarse gravel, spangled very thick with a shining substance that almost dazzled the eye, and the sand upon either shore sparkled with the same splendid particles.

At first sight, the sunbeams, giving a yellow cast to these spangles, made us fancy them to be gold-dust and, consequently, that all our fortunes were made. Such hopes as these were the less extravagant, because several rivers lying much about the same latitude with this have formerly abounded with fragments of that tempting metal. Witness the Tagus in Portugal, the Heber in Thrace, and the Pactolus in Lesser Asia; not to mention the rivers on the gold coast in Africa, which lie in a more southern climate.

But we soon found ourselves mistaken, and our gold dust dwindled into small flakes of isinglass. However, though this did not make the river so rich as we could wish, yet it made it exceedingly beautiful.

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November 11. We had all been so refreshed by our day of rest that we decamped earlier than ordinary, and passed the several fords of Hico River. The woods were thick great part of this day's journey, so that we were forced to scuffle hard to advance seven miles, being equal in fatigue to double that distance of clear and open grounds.

We took up our quarters upon Sugartree Creek, in the same camp we had lain in when we came up, and happened to be entertained at supper with a rarity we had never had the fortune to meet with before during the whole expedition.

A little wide of this creek, one of the men had the luck to meet with a young buffalo of two years old. It was a bull which, notwithstanding he was no older, was as big as an ordinary ox. His legs are very thick and very short, and his hoofs exceeding broad. His back rose into a kind of bunch a little above the shoulders, which I believe contributes not a little to that creature's enormous strength. His body is vastly deep from the shoulders to the brisket, sometimes six feet in those that are full grown. The portly figure of this animal is disgraced by a shabby little tail, not above 12 inches long. This he cocks up on end whenever he's in a passion and, instead of lowing or bellowing, grunts with no better grace than a hog.

The hair growing on his head and neck is long and shagged, and so soft that it will spin into thread not unlike mohair, which might be wove into a sort of camlet.[19] Some people have stockings knit of it that would have served an Israelite during his forty years' march through the wilderness.

Its horns are short and strong, of which the Indians make large spoons, which they say will split and fall to pieces whenever poison is put into them. Its color is a dirty brown, and its hide so thick that it is scarce penetrable. However, it makes very spongy sole leather by the ordinary method of tanning, though this fault might by good contrivance be mended.

As thick as this poor beast's hide was, a bullet made shift to enter it and fetch him down. It was found all alone, though buffaloes seldom are. They usually range about in herds, like other cattle, and, though they differ something in figure, are certainly of the same species. There are two reasons for this opinion: the flesh of both has exactly the same taste, and the mixed breed betwixt both, they say, will generate. All the difference I could perceive between the flesh of buffalo and common beef was that the flesh of the first was much yellower than that of the other, and the lean something tougher.

The men were so delighted with this new diet, that the gridiron and frying-pan had no more rest all night than a poor husband subject to curtain lectures. Buffaloes may be easily tamed when they are taken young. The best way to catch them is to carry a milch mare into the woods and, when you find a cow and a calf, to kill the cow and then, having catched the calf, to suckle it upon the mare. After once or twice sucking her, it will follow her home and become as gentle as another calf.

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[19] An Eastern fabric, perhaps originally made of camel's hair.

If we could get into a breed of them, they might be made very useful not only for the dairy by giving an ocean of milk, but also for drawing vast and cumbersome weights by their prodigious strength. These, with the other advantages I mentioned before, would make this sort of cattle more profitable to the owner than any other we are acquainted with, though they would need a world of provender.[20]

1728 1841

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From "A PROGRESS TO THE MINES[1] IN THE YEAR 1732"

September 18. For the pleasure of the good company of Mrs. Byrd and her little governor, my son,[2] I went about half way to the falls[3] in the chariot. There we halted, not far from a purling stream, and upon the stump of a propagate oak picked the bones of a piece of roast beef. By the spirit which that gave me, I was the better able to part with the dear companions of my travels, and to perform the rest of my journey on horseback by myself. I reached Shaccoa's[4] before two o'clock, and crossed the river to the mills. I had the grief to find them both stand as still for the want of water, as a dead woman's tongue for want of breath. It had rained so little for many weeks above the falls, that the Naiades[5] had hardly water enough left to wash their faces. However, as we ought to turn all our misfortunes to the best advantage, I directed Mr. Booker, my first minister[6] there, to make use of the lowness of the water for blowing up the rocks at the mouth of the canal. For that purpose I ordered iron drills to be made about two foot long, pointed with steel, chisel-fashion, in order to make holes, into which we put our cartridges of powder, containing each about three ounces. There wanted skill among my engineers to choose the best parts of the stone for boring, that we might blow to the most advantage. They made all their holes quite perpendicular, whereas they should have humored the grain of the stone for the more effectual execution. I ordered the points of the drills to be made chisel way, rather than the diamond, that they might need to be seldomer repaired, though in stone the diamond points would make the most dispatch. The water now flowed out of the river so slowly that the miller was obliged to pond it up in the canal by setting open the flood-gates at the mouth, and shutting those close at the mill. By this contrivance, he was able at any time to grind two or three bushels, either for his choice customers or for the use of my plantations. Then I walked to the place where they broke[7] the flax, which is wrought with much greater ease than the hemp, and is much better for spinning. From thence I paid a visit to the weaver, who needed a little of Minerva's inspiration[8] to make the most of a piece of fine cloth. Then I looked in upon my Caledonian spinster,[9] who was mended more in her looks than in her humor. However, she promised much, though at the same time intended to perform little. She is too high-spirited for Mr. Booker, who hates to have his sweet temper ruffled, and will rather suffer matters to go a little wrong sometimes than give his righteous spirit any uneasiness. He is very honest, and would make an admirable overseer where servants will do as they are bid. But eye-servants,[10] who want abundance of overlooking, are not so proper to be committed to his care. I found myself out of order, and for that reason retired early; yet with all this precaution had a gentle fever in the night, but towards morning nature sat open all her gates, and drove it out in a plentiful perspiration. . . .

Sept. 20. . . . I parted there with my intendant,[11] and pursued my journey to Mr. Randolph's, at Tuckahoe, without meeting with any adventure by the way. Here I found Mrs. Fleming, who was packing up her baggage with design to follow her husband the next day, who was gone to a new settlement in Goochland.[12] Both he and she have been about seven years persuading themselves to remove to that retired part of the country, though they had the two strong arguments of health and interest for so doing. The widow[13] smiled graciously upon me, and entertained me very handsomely. Here I learned all the tragical story of her daughter's humble marriage with her uncle's overseer. Besides the meanness of this mortal's aspect, the man has not one visible qualification, except impudence, to recommend him to a female's inclinations. But there is sometimes such a charm in that Hibernian endowment that frail woman can't withstand it, though it stand alone without any other recommendation. Had she run away with a gentleman or a pretty fellow, there might have been some excuse for her, though he were of inferior fortune: but to stoop to a dirty plebian without any kind of merit is the lowest prostitution. I found the family justly enraged at it; and though I had more good nature than to join in her condemnation, yet I could devise no excuse for so senseless a prank as this young gentlewoman had played. . . .

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[20] The American bison at this time extended from Tennessee to the Great Slave Lake, and from Oregon to western New York.

[1] Situated in Orange and Spottsylvania Counties, Virginia, on or near the Rapidan and Rappahannock rivers.

[2] Afterwards a fellow officer of Washington in the defense of Virginia in the French and Indian war.

[3] Falls of the James at the site of Richmond. Large tracts of land in this vicinity had descended to the Colonel from his father.

[4] At the site of Richmond, on the north bank. A year later Byrd planned the town there, and one at Petersburg.

[5] Guardian spirits of brooks and springs.

[6] Jocularly used: overseer.

[7] Broke the woody part of the flax stalk from the fiber.

[8] Minerva, goddess of wisdom, particularly presided over spinning and weaving.

[9] Scotch woman, perhaps a spinster in both senses of the word: spinner, and unmarried woman.

[10] Those who will work only under the eye of the master.

[11] overseer

Sept. 21. I was sorry in the morning to find myself stopped in my career by bad weather brought upon us by a north-east wind. This drives a world of raw unkindly vapors upon us from Newfoundland, loaden with blight, coughs, and pleurisies. However, I complained not, lest I might be suspected to be tired of the good company; though Mrs. Fleming was not so much upon her guard, but mutinied strongly at the rain, that hindered her from pursuing her dear husband. I said what I could to comfort a gentlewoman under so sad a disappointment. I told her a husband that stayed so much at home as hers did, could be no such violent rarity as for a woman to venture her precious health to go daggling through the rain after him, or to be miserable if she happened to be prevented. That it was prudent for married people to fast sometimes from one another, that they might come together again with the better stomach. That the best things in this world, if constantly used, are apt to be cloying, which a little absence would prevent. This was strange doctrine to a fond female, who fancies people should love with as little reason after marriage as before. . . .

September 22. We had another wet day to try both Mrs. Fleming's patience and my good breeding. The northeast wind commonly sticks by us three or four days, filling the atmosphere with damps injurious both to man and beast. The worst of it was, we had no good liquor to warm our blood and fortify our spirits against so strong a malignity. However, I was cheerful under all these misfortunes, and expressed no concern but a decent fear lest my long visit might be troublesome. Since I was like to have thus much leisure, I endeavored to find out what subject a dull married man could introduce that might best bring the widow to the use of her tongue. At length I discovered she was a notable quack, and therefore paid that regard to her knowledge as to put some questions to her about the bad distemper that raged then in the country. I mean the bloody flux, that was brought us in the negro-ship consigned to Col. Braxton. She told me she made use of very simple remedies in that case with very good success. She did the business either with hartshorn drink, that had plantain leaves boiled in it, or else with a strong decoction of St. Andrew's cross[14] in new milk instead of water. I agreed with her that those remedies might be very good, but would be more effectual after a dose or two of Indian physic. But for fear this conversation might be too grave for a widow, I turned the discourse and began to talk of plays; and finding her taste lay most towards comedy, I offered my service to read one to her, which she kindly accepted. She produced the second part of the *Beggars' Opera,*[15] which had diverted the Town for 40 nights successively, and gained four thousand pounds to the author. This was not owing altogether to the wit or humor that sparkled in it, but to some political reflections that seemed to hit the ministry. But the great advantage of the author was, that his interest was solicited by the Duchess of Queensbury, which no man could refuse who had but half an eye in his head, or half a guinea in his pocket. Her

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[12] Goochland County perpetuates the name.
[13] Byrd does not tell who she is.

[14] A medicinal herb, *Ascyrum hypericoides.*
[15] Byrd means that it was the first part of the poet Gay's *Beggars' Opera,* that had run for 40 (really 60) nights in London. The second part named *Polly* from one of the characters in the first, was prohibited from the stage because of its supposed political bias. The Duchess of Queensbury, an enthusiastic patroness of Gay, solicited subscriptions even in the royal palace to an edition of *Polly* at a guinea each, and for her partisanship was dismissed from the court. It is interesting to see how closely these Virginians followed London, "The Town," and were alive to the incidents of its gay life that have passed into the literary history of England. Imagine such interest on the part of the Puritan aristocracy of Boston at this time!

Grace, like death, spared nobody, but even took my Lord Selkirk[16] in for two guineas, to repair which extravagance he lived upon Scots herrings two months afterwards. But the best story was, she made a very smart[17] officer in His Majesty's guards give her a guinea, who, swearing at the same time 'twas all he had in the world, she sent him fifty for it the next day, to reward his obedience. After having acquainted my company with the history of the play, I read three acts of it, and left Mrs. Fleming and Mr. Randolph to finish it, who read as well as most actors do at a rehearsal. Thus we killed the time, and triumphed over the bad weather.

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September 27. . . . I took my leave about ten, and drove over a spacious level road ten miles to a bridge built over the river Po, which is one of the four branches of Matopany, about 40 yards wide. Two miles beyond that, we passed by a plantation belonging to the company, of about 500 acres, where they keep a great number of oxen to relieve those that have dragged their loaded carts thus far. Three miles farther we came to the Germanna road, where I quitted the chair,[18] and continued my journey on horseback. I rode eight miles together over a stony road, and had on either side continual poisoned fields, with nothing but saplings growing on them. Then I came into the main county road that leads from Fredericksburgh to Germanna, which last place I reached in ten miles more. This famous town consists of Colonel Spotswood's[19] enchanted castle on one side of the street, and a baker's dozen of ruinous tenements on the other, where so many German families had dwelt some years ago; but are now removed ten miles higher, in the fork of Rappahannock, to land of their own. There had also been a chapel about a bow-shot from the Colonel's house, at the end of an avenue of cherry trees; but some pious people had lately burnt it down with the intent to get another built nearer to their own homes. Here I arrived about three o'clock, and found only Mrs. Spotswood at home, who received her old acquaintance with many a gracious smile. I was carried into a room elegantly set off with pier glasses, the largest of which came soon after to an odd misfortune. Amongst other favorite animals that cheered this lady's solitude, a brace of tame deer ran familiarly about the house, and one of them came to stare at me as a stranger. But unluckily spying his own figure in the glass, he made a spring over the tea table that stood under it, and shattered the glass to pieces and, falling back upon the tea table, made a terrible fracas among the china. This exploit was so sudden, and accompanied with such a noise, that it surprised me, and perfectly frightened Mrs. Spotswood. But 'twas worth all the damage to show the moderation and good humor with which she bore this disaster. In the evening the noble Colonel came home from his mines, who saluted me very civilly; and Mrs. Spotswood's sister, Miss Theky, who had been to meet him *en cavalier*,[20] was so kind too as to bid me welcome. We talked over a legend[21] of old stories, supped about nine, and then prattled with the ladies till 'twas time for a traveler to retire. In the mean time I observed my old friend to be very uxorious and exceedingly fond of his children. This was so opposite to the maxims he used to preach up before he was married, that I could not forbear rubbing up the memory of them. But he gave a very good-natured turn to his change of sentiments by alleging that whoever brings a poor gentlewoman into so solitary a place, from all her friends and acquaintance, would be ungrateful not to use her and all that belongs to her with all possible tenderness.

September 28. We all kept snug in our several apartments till nine, except Miss Theky, who was the housewife of the family. At that hour we met over a pot of coffee, which was not quite strong enough to give us the palsy. After breakfast the Colonel and I left the ladies to their domestic affairs and took a turn in the garden, which has nothing beautiful but three terrace walks that fall in slopes one below another. I let him understand that, besides the pleasure of paying him a visit, I came to be instructed by so great a master in the mystery of making of iron wherein he had led the way, and was the Tubal Cain[22] of Virginia. He corrected me a little there, by assuring me he was not only the first in this country, but the first in North America, who had erected a regular furnace. That they ran altogether upon bloomeries[23] in New England and Pennsylvania till his example had made them attempt greater works. But, in this last colony, they have so few ships to carry their iron to Great Britain that they must be content to make it only for their own use, and must be obliged to manufacture it when they have done. That he hoped he had done the country very great service by setting so good an example. That the four furnaces now at work in Virginia circulated a great sum of money for provisions and all other necessaries in the adjacent counties. That they took off a great number of hands from planting tobacco, and employed them in works that produced a large sum of money in England to the persons concerned, whereby the country is so much the richer. That they are besides a considerable advantage to Great Britain, because it lessens the quantity of bar iron imported from Spain, Holland, Sweden, Denmark and Muscovy, which used to be no less than 20,000 tons yearly; though at the same time no sow iron is imported thither from any country but only from the plantations. For most of this bar iron they do not only pay silver, but our friends in the Baltic are so nice, they even expect to be paid all in crown pieces. On the contrary, all the iron they receive from the plantations they pay for it in their own manufactures, and send for it in their own shipping. Then I inquired after his own mines and hoped, as he was the first that engaged in this great undertaking, that he had brought them to the most perfection. He told me he had iron in several parts of his great tract of land consisting of 45,000 acres, but that the mine he was at work upon was thirteen miles below Germanna. That his ore (which was very rich) he raised a mile from his furnace, and was obliged to cart the iron, when it was made, fifteen miles to Massaponux, a plantation he had upon Rappahanock River;[24] but that the road was exceeding good, gently declining all the way, and had no more than one hill to go up in the whole journey. For this reason his loaded carts went it in a day without difficulty. He said it was true his works were of the oldest standing: but that his long absence in England, and the wretched management of Mr. Greame, whom he had entrusted with his affairs, had put him back very much. That what with neglect and severity, above 80 of his slaves were lost while he was in England, and most of his cattle starved. That his furnace stood still great part of the time, and all his plantations ran to ruin. That indeed he was rightly served for committing his affairs to the care of a mathematician whose thoughts were always among the stars. That, nevertheless, since his return he had applied himself to rectify his steward's mistakes and bring his business again into order. That now he had contrived to do everything with his own people except raising the mine[25] and running the iron, by which he had contracted his expense very much. Nay, he believed that by his directions he could bring sensible negroes to perform those parts of the work tolerably well. But at the same time he gave me to understand that his furnace had done no great feats lately, because he had been taken up in building an air furnace at Massaponux which he had now brought to perfection, and should be thereby able to furnish the whole country with all sorts of cast iron as cheap and as good as ever came from England. I told him he must do one thing more to have a full vent[26] for those commodities; he must keep a shallop[27] running into all the rivers, to carry his wares home to people's own doors. And, if he would do that, I would set a good example and take of a whole ton of them. Our conversation on this subject continued till dinner, which was both elegant and plentiful. The afternoon was devoted to the ladies, who showed me one of their most beautiful walks. They conducted me through a shady lane to the landing, and by the way made me drink some very fine water that issued from a marble fountain and ran incessantly. Just behind it was a covered bench, where Miss Theky often sat and bewailed her virginity. Then we proceeded to the river, which is the south branch of Rappahanock, about 50 yards wide, and so rapid that the ferry boat is drawn over by a chain, and therefore called the Rapidan. At night we drank prosperity to all the Colonel's projects in a bowl of rack punch,[28] and then retired to our devotions.

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[16] A Scotchman; a characteristic English thrust at alleged Scotch penuriousness.

[17] finely dressed

[18] Sedan chairs were then sometimes used for rather extensive journeys.

[19] Colonel Spotswood, British army officer and governor of Virginia from 1710-1722, was a prominent figure in the political and commercial development of Virginia. This residence, his manor house, built in a wide loop of the Rapidan, commanded a view of the river and surrounding country. The local name Germanna Mills remained as late as the Civil War.

[20] on horseback.

[21] It is possible Byrd means legion.

[22] The first worker in iron. See *Genesis* iv. 22.

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[23] Mills for producing wrought iron directly from the ore without the process of transforming it from cast iron.

[24] There is a confusion in places here hard to reconcile with modern, or even eighteenth century maps.

[25] ore

[26] sale, market

[27] A boat for shallow water navigation.

[28] Strictly, punch made with arrack, a liquor distilled from the cocoa palm.

September 29. Having employed about two hours in retirement, I sallied out at the first summons to breakfast where our conversation with the ladies, like whip sillabub,[29] was very pretty, but had nothing in it. This it seems was Miss Theky's birthday, upon which I made her my compliments, and wished she might live twice as long a married woman as she had lived a maid. I did not presume to pry into the secret of her age, nor was she forward to disclose it for this humble reason, lest I should think her wisdom fell short of her years. . . . Then the Colonel and I took another turn in the garden, to discourse farther on the subject of iron. He was very frank in communicating all his dear-bought experience to me, and told me very civilly he would not only let me into the whole secret, but would make a journey to James River and give me his faithful opinion of all my conveniences.[30] For his part he wished there were many more iron works in the country, provided the parties concerned would preserve a constant harmony among themselves, and meet and consult frequently what might be for their common advantage. By this they might be better able to manage the workmen, and reduce their wages to what was just and reasonable. After this frank speech, he began to explain the whole charge of an iron-work. He said there ought at least to be an hundred negroes employed in it, and those upon good land would make corn, and raise provisions enough to support themselves and the cattle, and do every other part of the business. That the furnace might be built for £700 and made ready to go to work, if I went the nearest way to do it, especially, since coming after so many, I might correct their errors and avoid their miscarriages. That if I had ore and wood enough, and a convenient stream of water to set the furnace upon, having neither too much nor too little water, I might undertake the affair with a full assurance of success; provided the distance of carting be not too great, which is exceedingly burdensome. That there must be abundance of wheel carriages, shod with iron, and several teams of oxen, provided to transport the wood that is to be coaled,[31] and afterwards the coal and ore to the furnace, and last of all the sow iron to the nearest water carriage, and carry back limestone and other necessaries from thence to the works; and a sloop also would be useful to carry the iron on board the ships, the masters not being always in the humor to fetch it. Then he enumerated the people that were to be hired, viz.: a founder, a mine-raiser,[32] a collier, a stocktaker, a clerk, a smith, a carpenter, a wheelwright, and several carters. That these altogether will be a standing charge of about £500 a year. That the amount of freight, custom, commission and other charges in England, comes to 27 shillings a ton. But that the merchants yearly find out means to inflame the account with new articles,[33] as they do in those of tobacco. That, upon the whole matter, the expenses here and in England may be computed modestly at £3 a ton. And the rest that the iron sells for will be clear gain, to pay for the land and negroes, which 'tis to be hoped will be £3 more for every ton that is sent over. As this account agreed pretty near with that which Mr. Chiswell had given me, I set it down (notwithstanding it may seem a repetition of the same thing) to prove that both these gentlemen were sincere in their representations. We had a Michaelmas goose for dinner, of Miss Theky's own raising. . . . In the afternoon we walked in a meadow by the river side, which winds in the form of a horseshoe about Germanna, making it a peninsula containing about 400 acres. Rappahanock forks about fourteen miles below this place, the northern branch being the larger, and consequently must be the river that bounds my Lord Fairfax's grant of the northern neck.

September 30. The sun rose clear this morning and so did I, and finished all my little affairs by breakfast. It was then resolved to wait on the ladies on horseback, since the bright sun, the fine air, and the wholesome exercise all invited us to it. We forded the river a little above the ferry and rode six miles up the neck to a fine level piece of rich land where we found about twenty plants of ginseng,[34] with the scarlet berries growing on the top of the middle stalk, The root of this is of wonderful virtue in many cases, particularly to raise the spirit and promote perspiration, which makes it specific in colds and coughs. The Colone complimented me with all we found, in return for my telling him the virtues of it. We were all pleased to find so much of this king of plants so near the Colonel's habitation and growing, too, upon his own land; but were, however, surprised to find it upon level ground after we had been told it grew only upon the north side of stony mountains. I carried home this treasure with as much joy as if every root had been a graft of the tree of life, and washed and dried it carefully. This airing made us hungry as so many hawks so that, between appetite and a very good dinner, 'twas difficult to eat like a philosopher. In the afternoon the ladies walked me about amongst all their little animals, with which they amuse themselves and furnish the table; the worst of it is, they are so tender-hearted they shed a silent tear every time any of them are killed. At night the Colonel and I quitted the threadbare subject of iron, and changed the scene to politics. He told me the Ministry[35] had receded from their demand upon New England to raise a standing salary for all succeeding governors, for fear some curious members of the House of Commons should inquire how the money was disposed of that had been raised in the other American colonies for the support of their governors. And particularly what becomes of the four and one half per cent. paid in the sugar colonies for that purpose. That duty produces near £20,000 a year; but, being remitted into the exchequer, not one of the West India governors is paid out of it; but they, like falcons, are let loose upon the people, who are complaisant enough to settle other revenues upon them, to the great impoverishing of these colonies. In the mean time, 'tis certain the money raised by the four and one half per cent. molders away between the minister's fingers, nobody knows how, like the quitrents[36] of Virginia. And 'tis for this reason that the instructions forbidding all governors to accept of any presents from their assemblies are dispensed with in the Sugar Islands,[37] while 'tis strictly insisted upon everywhere else, where the assemblies were so wise as to keep their revenues among themselves. He said further that, if the assembly in New England would stand bluff,[38] he did not see how they could be forced to raise money against their will; for if they should direct it to be done by act of Parliament, which they have threatened to do, (though it be against the right of Englishmen to be taxed but by their representatives,) yet they would find it no easy matter to put such an act in execution. Then the Colonel read me a lecture upon tar, affirming that it can't be made in this warm climate after the manner they make it in Sweden and Muscovy, by barking the tree two yards from the ground, whereby the turpentine descends all into the stump in a year's time, which is then split in pieces in order for the kiln. But here the sun fries out the turpentine in the branches of the tree, when the leaves are dried, and hinders it from descending. But, on the contrary, those who burn tar of lightwood in the common way, and are careful about it, make as good as that which comes from the east country, nor will it burn the cordage more than that does. Then we entered upon the subject of hemp, which the Colonel told me he never could raise here from foreign seed, but at last sowed the seed of wild hemp, (which is very common in the upper parts of the country) and that came up very thick. That he sent about 500 pounds of it to England, and that the Commissioners of the Navy, after a full trial of it, reported to the Lords of the Admiralty that it was equal in goodness to the best that comes from Riga.[39] I told him if our hemp were never so good it would not be worth the making here, even though they should continue the bounty. And my reason was, because labor is not more than two pence a day in the east country where they produce hemp, and here we can't compute it at less than ten pence which, being five times as much as their labor, and considering besides that our freight is three times as dear as theirs, the price that will make them rich will ruin us, as I have found by woful experience. Besides, if the King, who must have the refusal,[40] buys our hemp, the navy is so long in paying both the price and the bounty that we who live from hand to mouth can't afford to wait so long for it. And then our good friends, the merchants, load it with so many charges that they run away with great part of the profit themselves. Just like the bald eagle which, after the fishing hawk has been at great pains to catch a fish, pounces upon and takes it from him. Our conversation was interrupted by a summons to supper, for the ladies, to show their power, had by this time brought us tamely to go to bed with our bellies full, though we both at first declared positively against it. So very pliable a thing is frail man when women have the bending of him.

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[29] Wine, ale, or cider whipped with cream.
[30] facilities, natural resources
[31] burned into charcoal
[32] skilled mechanic to oversee the hoisting of the ore (?)
[33] increase the account with new stipulations
[34] A plant with an aromatic root much valued as a drug.

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[35] The English ministry.

[36] Sums paid to an over-lord or a government in lieu of services that might otherwise be demanded.

[37] Probably the sugar producing islands of the West Indies, in the commerce of which all the colonies were greatly interested.

[38] firm

[39] A Baltic port noted for its trade in hemp.

[40] In trade, the right of first buying, or refusing to buy, a commodity.

. . . .

1732 1841

JONATHAN EDWARDS

Born, East Windsor, Connecticut, 1703, died, Princeton, New Jersey, 1758. Descended from an educated ancestry, and himself remarkably precocious, Edwards was graduated from Yale in 1720. He remained two years as tutor, and in 1727 was made colleague pastor with his grandfather of the church at Northampton, Massachusetts. His strictness in church discipline forced his resignation from this pastorate, and he became missionary to the Indians of Stockbridge, Massachusetts, 1750. It was here that he wrote *The Freedom of the Will,* 1754; *The Nature of Virtue,* posthumously published; *Treatise on Original Sin,* 1758; and *A Dissertation Concerning the End for Which God Created the World.* He was elected to the presidency of the College of New Jersey (Princeton College), 1758, and died the same year. The commanding intellectual figure of New England throughout his day, preacher, missionary, philosopher, educator, he may perhaps be longest known by his philosophical work, *The Freedom of the Will.* His diary and sermons, however, are of more popular interest and give a significant glimpse into the Puritan heart absorbed in all-consuming inward struggle. An interesting study might be made of the differences in religious and moral experience between Edwards, Mather, Woolman, and Franklin.

From A BIT OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Found in his own hand-writing

I had a variety of concerns and exercises[1] about my soul from my childhood; but I had two more remarkable seasons of awakening, before I met with that change by which I was brought to those new dispositions, and that new sense of things, that I have since had. The first time was when I was a boy, some years before I went to college, at a time of remarkable awakening in my father's congregation.[2] I was then very much affected for many months, and concerned about the things of religion, and my soul's salvation; and was abundant in religious duties.[3] I used to pray five times a day in secret, and to spend much time in religious conversation with other boys; and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what kind of delight in religion. My mind was much engaged in it, and had much self-righteous pleasure; and it was my delight to abound in religious duties. I with some of my schoolmates joined together, and built a booth in a swamp, in a very retired spot, for a place of prayer. And besides, I had particular secret places of my own in the woods, where I used to retire by myself; and was from time to time much affected. My affections seemed to be lively and easily moved, and I seemed to be in my element when engaged in religious duties. And I am ready to think, many are deceived with such affections, and such a kind of delight as I then had in religion, and mistake it for grace.[4]

But in process of time, my convictions and affections wore off and I entirely lost all those affections and delights and left off secret prayer at least as to any constant performance of it; and returned like a dog to his vomit, and went on in the ways of sin.[5] Indeed I was at times very uneasy, especially toward the latter part of my time at college; when it pleased God to seize me with a pleurisy, in which he brought me nigh to the grave, and shook me over the pit of hell. And yet it was not long after my recovery, before I fell again into my old ways of sin. But God would not suffer me to go on with any quietness; I had great and violent inward struggles, till, after many conflicts with wicked inclinations, repeated resolutions, and bonds that I laid myself under by a kind of vows to God, I was brought wholly to break off all former wicked ways, and all ways of known outward sin; and to apply myself to seek salvation, and practice many religious duties; but without that kind of affection and delight which I had formerly experienced. My concern now wrought more by inward struggles and conflicts, and self reflections. I made seeking my salvation the main business of my life. But yet it seems to me I sought it after a miserable manner; which has made me sometimes since to question, whether ever it issued in that which was saving; being ready to doubt, whether such miserable seeking ever succeeded. I was indeed brought to seek salvation in a manner that I never was before; I felt a spirit to part with all things in the world, for an interest in Christ. My concern continued and prevailed, with many exercising thoughts and inward struggles; but yet it never seemed to be proper to express that concern by the name of terror.

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[1] distresses

[2] His father was for sixty years pastor at Windsor, Connecticut.

[3] The forms of religious life which it was hoped would lead to a more certain revelation of the state of the individual's soul.

[4] divine favor

[5] Not sinful acts, but a perfunctory rather than a positive attitude toward religious matters.

From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well, when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice in thus eternally disposing of men, according to his sovereign pleasure. But I never could give an account how, or by what means, I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's Spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However my mind rested in it; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections. And there has been a wonderful alteration in my mind, with respect to the doctrine of God's sovereignty, from that day to this; so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an objection against it, in the most absolute sense, in God showing mercy to whom he will show mercy, and hardening[6] whom he will. God's absolute sovereignty and justice, with respect to salvation and damnation, is what my mind seems to rest assured of, as much as of any thing that I see with my eyes; at least it is so at times. But I have often, since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty than I had then. I have often since had not only a conviction, but a delightful conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceeding pleasant, bright, and sweet. Absolute sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first conviction was not so.

. . . .

Not long after I first began to experience these things, I gave an account to my father of some things that had passed in my mind. I was pretty much affected by the discourse we had together; and when the discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary place in my father's pasture, for contemplation. And as I was walking there, and looking upon the sky and clouds, there came into my mind so sweet a sense of the glorious majesty and grace of God, as I know not how to express. I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction; majesty and meekness joined together; it was a sweet, and gentle, and holy majesty; and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high, and great, and holy gentleness.

After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of everything was altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast, or appearance of divine glory, in almost everything. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love, seemed to appear in everything; in the sun, moon, and stars; in the clouds and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for a long time; and in the day spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things; in the meantime singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. And scarce anything, among all the works of nature, was so sweet to me as thunder and lightning; formerly, nothing had been so terrible to me. Before, I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunder storm rising; but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God, if I may so speak, at the first appearance of a thunder storm; and used to take the opportunity, at such times, to fix myself in order to view the clouds and see the lightnings play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunder, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God. While thus engaged, it always seemed natural to me to sing, or chant forth my meditations; or, to speak my thoughts in soliloquies with a singing voice.[7]

. . . .

The heaven I desired was a heaven of holiness; to be with God, and to spend my eternity in divine love, and holy communion with Christ. My mind was very much taken up with contemplations on heaven, and the enjoyments there; and living there in perfect holiness, humility, and love; and it used at that time to appear a great part of the happiness of heaven, that there the saints could express their love to Christ. It appeared to me a great clog and burden that what I felt within, I could not express as I desired. The inward ardor of my soul seemed to be hindered and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think, how in heaven this principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared exceedingly delightful, as a world of love; and that all happiness consisted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine love.

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[6] *Romans* ix. 18.

[7] Edwards's record of his spiritual experiences coincides with that of many other persons of intense devotion from David to St. Francis and to modern times.

I remember the thoughts I used then to have of holiness; and said sometimes to myself, "I do certainly know that I love holiness, such as the Gospel prescribes." It appeared to me that there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely; the highest beauty and amiableness—a divine beauty; far purer than anything here upon earth; and that everything else was like mire and defilement, in comparison of it.

Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm nature; which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness, and ravishment to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers; enjoying a sweet calm, and the gentle vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year; low, and humble on the ground, opening its bosom to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory, rejoicing as it were in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragrancy; standing peacefully and lovingly, in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms, to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature[8] holiness, that I had so great a sense of its loveliness as humility, brokenness of heart, and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this, to lie low before God, as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be all, that I might become as a little child. . . .

On Jan. 12, 1723, I made a solemn dedication of myself to God, and wrote it down; giving up myself and all that I had to God to be for the future in no respect my own; to act as one that had no right to himself in any respect. And solemnly vowed to take God for my whole portion and felicity; looking on nothing else as any part of my happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his law for the constant rule of my obedience; engaging to fight with all my might against the world, the flesh, and the devil, to the end of my life. But I have reason to be infinitely humbled, when I consider how much I have failed of answering my obligation.

. . . .

They say there is a young lady[9] in [New Haven] who is beloved of that Great Being, who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this Great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight, and that she hardly cares for anything, except to meditate on him—that she expects after a while to be received up where he is, to be raised up out of the world and caught up into heaven; being assured that he loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from him always. There she is to dwell with him, and to be ravished with his love and delight forever. Therefore if you present all the world before her, with the richest of its treasures, she disregards it and cares not for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. She has a strange sweetness in her mind and singular purity in her affections; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct; and you could not persuade her to do anything wrong or sinful, if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this Great Being.

She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness, and universal benevolence of mind; especially after this great God has manifested himself to her mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place, singing sweetly; and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure; and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have someone invisible always conversing with her.[10]

1723

From the sermon SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD[11]

(Based on the text: Their foot shall slide in due time. *Deuteronomy* xxxii. 35.)

. . . .

The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given; and the longer the stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course when once it is let loose. 'Tis true that judgment against your evil work has not been executed hitherto; the floods of God's vengeance have been withheld; but your guilt in the mean time is constantly increasing, and you are every day treasuring up more wrath; the waters are continually rising and waxing more and more mighty; and there is nothing but the mere pleasure of God that holds the waters back, that are unwilling to be stopped, and press hard to go forward. If God should only withdraw his hand from the floodgate it would immediately fly open, and the fiery floods of the fierceness and wrath of God would rush forth with inconceivable fury, and would come upon you with omnipotent power; and if your strength were ten thousand times greater than it is, yea, ten thousand times greater than the strength of the stoutest, sturdiest devil in hell, it would be nothing to withstand or endure it.

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[8] The holiness of a created thing as distinguished from the holiness of God. The sentence structure, not uncommon in Elizabethan English, is now considered incorrect.

[9] This paragraph was found written upon a blank leaf. It is a description of Miss Sarah Pierrepont, whom he married.

[10] Thomas Wentworth Higginson, speaking of this paragraph, says in his *History of American Literature*, "This may fairly be called the high-water mark of Puritan prose."

[11] The congregation at Enfield, Connecticut, appears to have remained indifferent during a

The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood.

Thus are all you that never passed under a great change of heart by the mighty power of the Spirit of God upon your souls; all that were never born again and made new creatures, and raised from being dead in sin to a state of new and before altogether unexperienced light and life, (however you may have reformed your life in many things, and may have had religious affections, and may keep up a form of religion in your families and closets and in the house of God, and may be strict in it) you are thus in the hands of an angry God; 'tis nothing but his mere pleasure that keeps you from being this moment swallowed up in everlasting destruction.

However unconvinced you may now be of the truth of what you hear, by and by you will be fully convinced of it. Those that are gone from being in the like circumstances with you, see that it was so with them; for destruction came suddenly upon most of them; when they expected nothing of it, and while they were saying, Peace and safety: now they see that those things that they depended on for peace and safety were nothing but thin air and empty shadows.

The God that holds you over the pit of hell much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times so abominable in his eyes as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince: and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. 'Tis ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you was suffered to awake again in this world after you closed your eyes to sleep and there is no other reason to be given why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given why you han't gone to hell since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending his solemn worship. Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you don't this very moment drop down into hell.

O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in. 'Tis a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you as against many of the damned in hell. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it and burn it asunder; and you have no interest in any Mediator, and nothing to lay hold of to save yourself, nothing to keep off the flames of wrath, nothing of your own, nothing that you ever have done, nothing that you can do, to induce God to spare you one moment. . . .

time of general religious awakening. Edwards, invited from Northampton, preached this sermon as a "lecture," July 8, 1741, to the ministers and people of Enfield and the neighboring towns. Trumbull in his *History of Connecticut* says that before the close "there was heard such a breathing of distress and weeping, that the preacher was obliged to speak to the people and desire silence that he might be heard!" Think as we may concerning the subject matter of Edwards's sermon, we cannot escape the vividness of his imagination and the power of his appeal. This selection is included as one of the most vivid specimens of Puritan imagination and mid-eighteenth century belief. Compare this example of oratory with those of the professional orators of a century later.

It is *everlasting* wrath. It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment; but you must suffer it to all eternity: there will be no end to this exquisite, horrible misery. When you look forward you shall see a long forever, a boundless duration before you, which will swallow up your thoughts and amaze your soul; and you will absolutely despair of ever having any deliverance, any end, any mitigation, any rest at all; you will know certainly that you must wear out long ages, millions of millions of ages, in wrestling and conflicting with this almighty,merciless vengeance; and then when you have so done, when so many ages have actually been spent by you in this manner, you will know that all is but a point to what remains. So that your punishment will indeed be infinite. Oh, who can express what the state of a soul in such circumstances is! All that we can possibly say about it gives but a very feeble, faint representation of it; it is inexpressible and inconceivable: for "who knows the power of God's anger?"

How dreadful is the state of those that are daily and hourly in danger of this great wrath and infinite misery! But this is the dismal case of every soul in this congregation that has not been born again, however moral and strict, sober and religious, they may otherwise be. Oh, that you would consider it, whether you be young or old! There is reason to think that there are many in this congregation now hearing this discourse, that will actually be the subjects of this very misery to all eternity. We know not who they are, or in what seats they sit, or what thoughts they now have. It may be they are now at ease and hear all these things without much disturbance, and are now flattering themselves that they are not the persons, promising themselves that they shall escape. If we knew that there was one person, and but one, in the whole congregation, that was to be the subject of this misery, what an awful thing it would be to think of! If we knew who it was, what an awful sight would it be to see such a person! How might all the rest of the congregation lift up a lamentable and bitter cry over him! But alas! instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell! And it would be a wonder, if some that are now present should not be in hell in a very short time, before this year is out. And it would be no wonder if some persons that now sit here in some seats of this meeting-house in health, and quiet and secure, should be there before tomorrow morning. Those of you that finally continue in a natural condition, that shall keep out of hell longest, will be there in a little time! Your damnation don't slumber; it will come swiftly and, in all probability, very suddenly upon many of you. You have reason to wonder that you are not already in hell. 'Tis doubtless the case of some that heretofore you have seen and known, that never deserved hell more than you and that heretofore appeared as likely to have been now alive as you. Their ease is past all hope; they are crying in extreme misery and perfect despair. But here you are in the land of the living and in the house of God, and have an opportunity to obtain salvation. What would not those poor, damned, hopeless souls give for one day's such opportunity as you now enjoy! . . .

Are there not many here that have lived long in the world that are not to this day born again, and so are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and have done nothing ever since they have lived but treasure up wrath against the day of wrath? Oh, sirs, your case in an especial manner is extremely dangerous; your guilt and hardness of heart is extremely great. Don't you see how generally persons of your years are passed over and left in the present remarkable and wonderful dispensation of God's mercy? You had need to consider yourselves and wake thoroughly out of sleep; you cannot bear the fierceness and the wrath of the infinite God.

And you that are young men and young women, will you neglect this precious season that you now enjoy, when so many others of your age are renouncing all youthful vanities and flocking to Christ? You especially have now an extraordinary opportunity; but if you neglect it, it will soon be with you as it is with those persons that spent away all the precious days of youth in sin and are now come to such a dreadful pass in blindness and hardness.

And you children that are unconverted, don't you know that you are going down to hell to bear the dreadful wrath of that God that is now angry with you every day and every night? Will you be content to be the children of the devil, when so many other children in the land are converted and are become the holy and happy children of the King of kings?

And let every one that is yet out of Christ and hanging over the pit of hell, whether they be old men and women or middle-aged or young people or little children, now hearken to the loud calls of God's word and providence. This acceptable year of the Lord that is a day of such great favor to some will doubtless be a day of as remarkable vengeance to others. Men's hearts harden and their guilt increases apace at such a day as this, if they neglect their souls. And never was there so great danger of such persons being given up to hardness of heart and blindness of mind. God seems now to be hastily gathering in his elect in all parts of the land; and probably the bigger part of adult persons that ever shall be saved will be brought in now in a little time, and that it will be as it was on that great outpouring of the Spirit upon the Jews in the Apostles' days, the election will obtain and the rest will be blinded. If this should be the case with you, you will eternally curse this day, and will curse the day that ever you was born to see such a season of the pouring out of God's Spirit, and will wish that you had died and gone to hell before you had seen it. Now undoubtedly it is as it was in the days of John the Baptist, the axe is in an extraordinary manner laid at the root of the trees, that every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit may be hewn down and cast into the fire.

Therefore let every one that is out of Christ now awake and fly from the wrath to come. The wrath of Almighty God is now undoubtedly hanging over great part of this congregation. Let every one fly out of Sodom. *"Haste and escape for your lives, look not behind you, escape to the mountain, lest ye be consumed."*

1741 1741

JOHN WOOLMAN

Born at Northampton, New Jersey, 1720, died, York, England, 1772. Woolman was born in the humblest circumstances, was farmer, shop keeper, tailor, merchant. In 1741 he began to preach as an itinerant evangelist of the Society of Friends, traveling throughout the colonies, and finally to England, where he died of smallpox. He wrote a tract, *Some Considerations on the Keeping of Negroes*, 1754. His works, including the *Journal*, were published in 1774-5.

From A JOURNAL OF JOHN WOOLMAN[1]

From CHAPTER I

[*His Youth*]

I have often felt a motion of love to leave some hints in writing of my experience of the goodness of God; and now, in the thirty-sixth year of my age, I begin this work.

I was born in Northampton, in Burlington county, West Jersey,[2] in the year 1720; and before I was seven years old I began to be acquainted with the operations of Divine love. Through the care of my parents, I was taught to read near as soon as I was capable of it; and as I went from school one seventh-day, I remember, while my companions went to play by the way, I went forward out of sight, and sitting down, I read the twenty-second chapter of the *Revelation:* "He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the lamb," etc.; and in reading it, my mind was drawn to seek after that pure habitation, which, I then believed, God had prepared for his servants. The place where I sat, and the sweetness that attended my mind, remain fresh in my memory. This, and the like gracious visitations, had that effect upon me, that when boys used ill language, it troubled me; and through the continued mercies of God, I was preserved from it.

The pious instructions of my parents were often fresh in my mind when I happened to be among wicked children, and were of use to me. My parents having a large family of children, used frequently, on first-days,[3] after meeting, to put us to read in the Holy Scriptures, or some religious books, one after another, the rest sitting by without much conversation; which I have since often thought was a good practice. From what I had read and heard, I believed there had been, in past ages, people who walked in uprightness before God, in a degree exceeding any that I knew or heard of, now living; and the apprehension of there being less steadiness and firmness amongst people in this age than in past ages, often troubled me while I was a child.

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[1] Beside Edwards's gloomy fire of soul Woolman seems essentially modern in the sweetness and simplicity of his religious belief. His care for the oppressed, whether bond or free, is the American counterpart of a similar impulse in Howard and Wilberforce, his English contemporaries, which marks the awakening of a broad humanitarianism in Christendom. The beauty of his inner life is notable. In Woolman's time the Quakers were despised for their unorthodox views and their refusal to do military service. People were yet alive who had seen Quakers hanged. Woolman and Franklin, neighbor philanthropists, moved in spheres exclusive each of the other. To understand Woolman one must realize the supreme importance he attaches to the inner voice, and man s duty to heed it.

[2] The territory comprising New Jersey was divided into East and West New Jersey in 1676, Quakers becoming proprietors of West New Jersey. Though the colony was reunited in 1702, the terms of the old division were long in use.

[3] The first day of the week; Quaker terminology.

A thing remarkable in my childhood was, that once, going to a neighbor's house, I saw, on the way, a robin sitting on her nest; and as I came near she went off, but, having young ones, flew about, and with many cries expressed her concern for them. I stood and threw stones at her, till one striking her, she fell down dead. At first I was pleased with the exploit; but after a few minutes was seized with horror as having, in a sportive way, killed an innocent creature while she was careful for her young. I beheld her lying dead, and thought those young ones, for which she was so careful, must now perish for want of their dam to nourish them; and after some painful considerations on the subject, I climbed up the tree, took all the young birds, and killed them, supposing that better than to leave them to pine away and die miserably; and believed, in this case, that Scripture proverb was fulfilled, "The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." I then went on my errand, but for some hours could think of little else but the cruelties I had committed, and was much troubled. Thus He whose tender mercies are over all his works hath placed a principle in the human mind, which incites to exercise goodness towards every living creature; and this being singly attended to, people become tender-hearted and sympathizing; but being frequently and totally rejected, the mind becomes shut up in a contrary disposition.

About the twelfth year of my age, my father being abroad,[4] my mother reproved me for some misconduct, to which I made an undutiful reply; and the next first-day, as I was with my father returning from meeting, he told me he understood I had behaved amiss to my mother, and advised me to be more careful in future. I knew myself blamable, and in shame and confusion remained silent. Being thus awakened to a sense of my wickedness, I felt remorse in my mind, and getting home, I retired and prayed to the Lord to forgive me; and do not remember that I ever, after that, spoke unhandsomely to either of my parents, however foolish in some other things.

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I kept steadily to meetings, spent first-days afternoon chiefly in reading the Scriptures, and other good books, and was early convinced in my mind that true religion consisted in an inward life wherein the heart doth love and reverence God the Creator, and learns to exercise true justice and goodness, not only toward all men but also toward the brute creatures; that as the mind was moved by an inward principle to love God as an invisible, incomprehensible Being, by the same principle it was moved to love him in all his manifestations in the visible world; that, as by his breath the flame of life was kindled in all animal sensible creatures, to say we love God as unseen,[5] and, at the same time, exercise cruelty toward the least creature moving by his life, or by life derived from him, was a contradiction in itself. I found no narrowness respecting sects and opinions, but believed that sincere upright-hearted people, in every society,[6] who truly love God, were accepted of him.

As I lived under the cross, and simply followed the openings of Truth, my mind, from day to day, was more enlightened; my former acquaintance were left to judge of me as they would, for I found it safest for me to live in private, and to keep these things sealed up in my own breast. While I silently ponder on that change wrought in me, I find no language equal to it,[7] nor any means to convey to another a clear idea of it. I looked upon the works of God in this visible creation, and an awfulness covered me; my heart was tender and often contrite, and universal love to my fellow-creatures increased in me; this will be understood by such who have trodden in the same path.

Some glances of real beauty may be seen in their faces who dwell in true meekness. There is a harmony in the sound of that voice to which Divine love gives utterance, and some appearance of right order in their temper and conduct whose passions are regulated; yet all these do not fully show forth that inward life to such who have not felt it; but this white stone[8] and new name are known rightly to such only who have them.

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From CHAPTER II

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[*Thoughts on Slavery*][9]

We left our province[10] on the 12th day of the third month, in the year 1746, and had several meetings in the upper part of Chester county[11] near Lancaster; in some of which, the love of Christ prevailed, uniting us together in his service. Then we crossed the river Susquehanna, and had several meetings in a new settlement, called the Redlands, the oldest of which, as I was informed, did not exceed ten years. It is the poorer sort of people that commonly begin to improve remote deserts: with a small stock they have houses to build, lands to clear and fence, corn to raise, clothes to provide, and children to educate; that Friends, who visit such, may well sympathize with them in their hardships in the wilderness; and though the best entertainment that such can give may seem coarse to some who are used to cities or old-settled places, it becomes the disciples of Christ to be content with it. . . . . .

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[4] away from home

[5] 1 *John* iv. 20.

[6] sect or religion

[7] to describe it

[8] *Revelation* ii. 17.

[9] Notice the absence of any bitterness or sectionalism. Woolman pitied the slave, but he had no hatred for the master.

[10] New Jersey

[11] In Pennsylvania: Woolman's tour can be followed approximately on any map. Many of the names of places are now county names.

We passed on to Monocacy, Fairfax, Hopewell, and Shanandoah, and had meetings; some of which were comfortable and edifying. From Shanandoah we set off in the afternoon for the old settlements of Friends in Virginia; and the first night, we, with our guide, lodged in the woods, our horses feeding near us; but he being poorly provided with a horse, and we young and having good horses, were free to part with him, and next day did so. In two days after, we reached our friend John Cheagle's, in Virginia; and taking the meetings in our way through Virginia, were, in some degree, baptized into a feeling sense of the conditions of the people; and our exercise[12] in general was more painful in these old settlements, than it had been amongst the back inhabitants: but through the goodness of our heavenly Father, the well of living waters was, at times, opened to our encouragement and the refreshment of the sincere-hearted. We went on to Perquimons, in North Carolina, had several meetings which were large, and found some openness in those parts, and a hopeful appearance among the young people. So we turned again in Virginia, and attended most of the meetings which we had not been at before, laboring amongst Friends in the love of Jesus Christ, as ability was given; and thence went to the mountains, up James River to a new settlement, and had several meetings amongst the people, some of whom had lately joined in membership with our Society. In our journeying to and fro, we found some honest-hearted Friends, who appeared to be concerned for the cause of truth among a backsliding people.

From Virginia, we crossed over the river Potomac, at Hoe's ferry, and made a general visit to the meetings of Friends on the western shore of Maryland, and were at their Quarterly Meeting. We had some hard labor amongst them, endeavoring to discharge our duty honestly as way opened, in the love of truth. And thence taking sundry meetings in our way, we passed homeward, where, through the favor of Divine Providence, we reached the 16th day of the sixth month in the year 1746; and I may say, that through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, which mortifies selfish desires, my companion and I traveled in harmony, and parted in the nearness of true brotherly love.

Two things were remarkable to me in this journey: first, in regard to my entertainment; when I eat, drank, and lodged free-cost, with people who lived in ease on the hard labor of their slaves, I felt uneasy; and as my mind was inward to the Lord, I found, from place to place, this uneasiness return upon me at times through the whole visit. Where the masters bore a good share of the burthen, and lived frugally, so that their servants were well provided for and their labor moderate, I felt more easy; but where they lived in a costly way and laid heavy burthens on their slaves, my exercise was often great, and I frequently had conversation with them, in private, concerning it. Secondly, the trade of importing slaves from their native country being much encouraged amongst them, and the white people and their children so generally living without much labor, were frequently the subjects of my serious thoughts; and I saw in these southern provinces so many vices and corruptions increased by this trade and this way of life, that it appeared to me as a dark gloominess hanging over the land; and though now many willingly run into it, yet in future the consequence will be grievous to posterity. I express it as it hath appeared to me, not at once, or twice, but as a matter fixed on my mind.

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From Chapter IV

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On the 9th [of May, 1757] breakfasted at a Friend's house, who putting us a little on our way, I had conversation with him in the fear of the Lord, concerning his slaves; in which my heart was tender, and I used much plainness of speech with him, which he appeared to take kindly. We pursued our journey without appointing meetings, being pressed in my mind to be at the Yearly Meeting in Virginia. And in my traveling on the road, I often felt a cry rise from the center of my mind, "O Lord, I am a stranger on the earth, hide not thy face from me." On the 11th day of the fifth month, we crossed the rivers Potomac and Rappahannock, and lodged at Port Royal: and on the way we happening in company with a colonel of the militia, who appeared to be a thoughtful man, I took occasion to remark on the difference in general between a people used to labor moderately for their living, training up their children in frugality and business, and those who live on the labor of slaves; the former, in my view, being the most happy life: with which he concurred, and mentioned the trouble arising from the untoward, slothful disposition of the negroes; adding that one of our laborers would do as much in a day as two of their slaves. I replied that free men, whose minds were properly on their business, found a satisfaction in improving, cultivating, and providing for their families; but negroes, laboring to support others, who claim them as their property, and expecting nothing but slavery during life, had not the like inducement to be industrious.

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[12] preaching (or, perhaps, spiritual anxiety)

After some further conversation, I said that men having power, too often misapplied it; that though we made slaves of the negroes, and the Turks made slaves of the Christians, I however believed that liberty was the natural right of all men equally; which he did not deny; but said the lives of the negroes were so wretched in their own country, that many of them lived better here than there. I only said, "There is great odds in regard to us, on what principle we act,"[13] and so the conversation on that subject ended. I may here add that another person, some time afterward, mentioned the wretchedness of the negroes, occasioned by their intestine wars, as an argument in favor of our fetching them away for slaves; to which I then replied, "If compassion on the Africans, in regard to their domestic troubles, were the real motives of our purchasing them, that spirit of tenderness being attended to, would incite us to use them kindly, that as strangers brought out of affliction, their lives might be happy among us; and as they are human creatures whose souls are as precious as ours, and who may receive the same help and comfort from the holy Scriptures as we do, we could not omit suitable endeavors to instruct them therein. But while we manifest by our conduct, that our views in purchasing them are to advance ourselves; and while our buying captives taken in war, animates those parties to push on that war, and increase desolation amongst them; to say they live unhappy in Africa, is far from being an argument in our favor." I further said, "The present circumstances of these provinces to me appear difficult; that the slaves look like a burthensome stone to such who burthen themselves with them, and if the white people retain a resolution to prefer their outward prospects of gain to all other considerations, and do not act conscientiously toward them as fellow-creatures, I believe that burthen will grow heavier and heavier, until times change in a way disagreeable to us." At this the person appeared very serious, and owned that in considering their condition, and the manner of their treatment in these provinces, he had sometimes thought it might be just in the Almighty so to order it.

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. . . The prospect of a road lying open to the same degeneracy,[14] in some parts of this newly settled land of America, in respect to our conduct toward the negroes, hath deeply bowed my mind in this journey; and though to briefly relate how these people are treated is no agreeable work, yet, after often reading over the notes I made as I traveled, I find my mind engaged to preserve them. Many of the white people in those provinces take little or no care of negro marriages; and when negroes marry after their own way, some make so little account of those marriages, that, with views of outward interest, they often part men from their wives by selling them far asunder; which is common when estates are sold by executors at vendue.[15] Many whose labor is heavy being followed at their business in the field by a man with a whip, hired for that purpose, have in common little else allowed but one peck of Indian corn and some salt for one week, with a few potatoes; the potatoes they commonly raise by their labor on the first day of the week. The correction ensuing on their disobedience to overseers, or slothfulness in business, is often very severe, and sometimes desperate.

Men and women have many times scarce clothes enough to hide their nakedness, and boys and girls ten and twelve years old, are often quite naked amongst their master's children. Some of our Society, and some of the society called New Lights,[16] use some endeavors to instruct those they have in reading; but in common this is not only neglected, but disapproved. These are the people by whose labor the other inhabitants are in a great measure supported, and many of them in the luxuries of life; these are the people who have made no agreement to serve us, and who have not forfeited their liberty that we know of; these are the souls for whom Christ died: and for our conduct toward them we must answer before Him who is no respecter of persons.

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[13] great difference in the principles on which we act (as explained farther on)

[14] He has just spoken of how the Jews became degenerate through love of dominion.

[15] auction

They who know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent, and are thus acquainted with the merciful, benevolent, Gospel spirit, will therein perceive that the indignation of God is kindled against oppression and cruelty; and in beholding the great distress of so numerous a people will find cause for mourning.

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From CHAPTER VIII

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[*A Visit to the Indians*][17]

[We] lodged at Bethlehem:[18] parting there with John, William[19] and we went forward on the 9th day of the sixth month, and got lodging on the floor of a house about five miles from Fort Allen. Here we parted with William. At this place we met with an Indian trader, lately come from Wyoming;[20] and in conversation with him, I perceived that white people often sell rum to the Indians, which I believe is a great evil; first, they being thereby deprived of the use of their reason, and their spirits violently agitated, quarrels often arise which end in mischief; and the bitterness and resentment occasioned hereby are frequently of long continuance. Again, their skins and furs, gotten through much fatigue and hard travels in hunting, with which they intended to buy clothing, when they become intoxicated they often sell at a low rate for more rum; and afterward, when they suffer for want of the necessaries of life, are angry with those who, for the sake of gain, took the advantage of their weakness. Of this their chiefs have often complained, at their treaties with the English. Where cunning people pass counterfeits, and impose that on others which is good for nothing, it is considered as a wickedness; but to sell that to people which we know does them harm, and which often works their ruin, for the sake of gain, manifests a hardened and corrupt heart, and is an evil which demands the care of all true lovers of virtue to suppress. While my mind this evening was thus employed, I also remembered that the people on the frontiers, among whom this evil is too common, are often poor, who venture to the outside of a colony, that they may live more independent of such as are wealthy, who often set high rents on their land: as being renewedly confirmed in a belief, that if all our inhabitants lived according to sound wisdom, laboring to promote universal love and righteousness, and ceased from every inordinate desire after wealth, and from all customs which are tinctured with luxury, the way would be easy for the inhabitants, though much more numerous than at present, to live comfortably on honest employments, without that temptation they are often under of being drawn into schemes to make settlements on lands which have not been purchased of the Indians, or of applying to that wicked practice of selling rum to them.

On the 10th day of the month [June, 1763] we set out early in the morning, and crossed the western branch of the Delaware, called the Great Lehigh, near Fort Allen; the water being high, we went over in a canoe. Here we met an Indian, and had some friendly conversation with him, and gave him some biscuit; and he having killed a deer, gave the Indians with us some of it. Then after traveling some miles, we met several Indian men and women with a cow and horse and some household goods, who were lately come from their dwelling at Wyoming, and going to settle at another place; we made them some small presents; and some of them understanding English, I told them my motive in coming into their country, with which they appeared satisfied. One of our guides talking awhile with an ancient woman concerning us, the poor old woman came to my companion and me, and took her leave of us with an appearance of sincere affection. So going on we pitched our tent near the banks of the same river, having labored hard in crossing some of those mountains called the Blue Ridge; and by the roughness of the stones and the cavities between them, and the steepness of the hills, it appeared dangerous: but we were preserved in safety, through the kindness of Him whose works in these mountainous deserts appeared awful; toward whom my heart was turned during this day's travel.

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[16] Probably a sect formed in this country in consequence of the preaching of Whitefield, and numerous in Virginia and North Carolina.

[17] Having for many years felt love in his heart "towards the natives in this land who dwell far back in the wilderness," Woolman, feeling that he might understand them and bring, as he explains on page 103, some message of brotherly sympathy to them, resolved to go as soon as the way opened. The opportunity came in 1763. The French and Indian War was scarcely over and Pontiac's War was just begun. The journey led him and his companion, Benjamin Parvin, far into the country of the Delawares involved in the war. The selection begins with the first days of the journey. All the places mentioned are in Pennsylvania.

[18] In 1742 the Moravians, a religious sect of the followers of John Huss, founded Bethlehem in Pennsylvania, where the brotherhood still maintains religious and educational establishments.

[19] John Pemberton and William Lightfoot, Quakers.

[20] Settled in 1762; in 1778 the scene of a massacre by the British and Indians.

Near our tent, on the sides of large trees peeled for that purpose, were various representations of men going to and returning from the wars, and of some killed in battle. This being a path heretofore used by warriors, and as I walked about viewing those Indian histories, which were painted mostly in red but some in black, and thinking on the innumerable afflictions which the proud, fierce spirit produceth in the world; thinking on the toils and fatigues of warriors, traveling over mountains and deserts; thinking on their miseries and distresses when wounded far from home by their enemies; and of their bruises and great weariness in chasing one another over the rocks and mountains; and of their restless, unquiet state of mind, who live in this spirit; and of the hatred which mutually grows up in the minds of the children of those nations engaged in war with each other: during these meditations, the desire to cherish the spirit of love and peace amongst these people, arose very fresh in me.[21] This was the first night that we lodged in the woods; and being wet with traveling in the rain, the ground, our tent, and the bushes which we purposed to lay under, our blankets also wet, all looked discouraging; but I believed that it was the Lord who had thus far brought me forward, and that he would dispose of me as he saw good, and therein I felt easy. So we kindled a fire with our tent open to it; and with some bushes next the ground, and then our blankets, we made our bed; and lying down, got some sleep: and in the morning feeling a little unwell, I went into the river; the water was cold, but soon after I felt fresh and well.

The 11th day of the sixth month, the bushes being wet, we tarried in our tent till about eight o'clock; when going on, crossed a high mountain supposed to be upward of four miles over; the steepness of the north side exceeding all the others: we also crossed two swamps; and it raining near night, we pitched our tent and lodged.

About noon, on our way we were overtaken by one of the Moravian brethren[22] going to Wehaloosing,[23] and an Indian man with him who could talk English; and we being together while our horses eat grass, had some friendly conversation; but they traveling faster than we, soon left us. This Moravian I understood had spent some time this spring at Wehaloosing; and was by some of the Indians invited to come again.

The 12th day of the sixth month, and first of the week, it being a rainy day, we continued in our tent; and here I was led to think on the nature of the exercise which hath attended me. Love was the first motion,[24] and thence a concern arose to spend some time with the Indians, that I might feel and understand their life and the spirit they live in, if haply I might receive some instruction from them, or they be in any degree helped forward by my following the leadings of Truth amongst them. As it pleased the Lord to make way for my going at a time when the troubles of war were increasing, and when by reason of much wet weather, traveling was more difficult than usual at that season, I looked upon it as a more favorable opportunity to season my mind, and bring me into a nearer sympathy with them: and as mine eye was to the great Father of mercies, humbly desiring to learn what his will was concerning me, I was made quiet and content.

Our guide's horse, though hoppled, went away in the night; and after finding our own, and searching some time for him, his footsteps were discovered in the path going back again, whereupon my kind companion went off in the rain, and after about seven hours returned with him; and here we lodged again, tying up our horses before we went to bed, and loosing them to feed about break of day.

On the 13th day of the sixth month, the sun appearing, we set forward; and as I rode over the barren hills, my meditations were on the alteration in the circumstances of the natives of this land since the coming of the English. The lands near the sea are conveniently situated for fishing; the lands near the rivers where the tides flow, and some above, are in many places fertile, and not mountainous, while the running of the tides makes passing up and down easy with any kind of traffic. Those natives have in some places, for trifling considerations, sold their inheritance so favorably situated, and in other places been driven back by superior force; so that in many places as their way of clothing themselves is now altered from what it was, and they are far remote from us, they have to pass over mountains, swamps, and barren deserts where traveling is very troublesome, in bringing their skins and furs to trade with us.

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[21] One might read long in colonial records for so sympathetic an attitude toward the Indians, and long in any literature of the time for such an attempt to put oneself in the place of the despised and oppressed.

[22] From Bethlehem.

[23] An Indian village, the modern Wyalusing in Bradford County, Pennsylvania.

[24] primary inner impulse

By the extending of English settlements, and partly by English hunters, the wild beasts they chiefly depend on for a subsistence are not so plentiful as they were; and people too often, for the sake of gain, open a door for them to waste their skins and furs in purchasing a liquor which tends to the ruin of them and their families. . . .

We reached the Indian settlement at Wyoming, and here we were told that an Indian runner had been at that place a day or two before us, and brought news of the Indians taking an English fort westward[25] and destroying the people, and that they were endeavoring to take another; and also that another Indian runner came there about the middle of the night before we got there, who came from a town about ten miles from Wehaloosing, and brought news that some Indian warriors from distant parts came to that town with two English scalps, and told the people that it was war with the English.

Our guides took us to the house of a very ancient man; and soon after we had put in our baggage, there came a man from another Indian house some distance off, and I perceiving there was a man near the door, went out; and he having a tomahawk wrapped under his matchcoat[26] out of sight, as I approached him he took it in his hand. I however went forward, and speaking to him in a friendly way perceived he understood some English: my companion then coming out, we had some talk with him concerning the nature of our visit in these parts; and then he going into the house with us, and talking with our guides, soon appeared friendly, and sat down and smoked his pipe. Though his taking his hatchet in his hand at the instant I drew near to him had a disagreeable appearance, I believe he had no other intent than to be in readiness in case any violence was offered to him. . . .

On the 14th day of the sixth month, we sought out and visited all the Indians hereabouts that we could meet with, they being chiefly in one place about a mile from where we lodged, in all perhaps twenty. Here I expressed the care I had on my mind for their good and told them that true love had made me willing thus to leave my family to come and see the Indians, and speak with them in their houses. Some of them appeared kind and friendly. So we took our leave of these Indians and went up the river Susquehanna about three miles, to the house of an Indian called Jacob January, who had killed his hog; and the women were making a store of bread, and preparing to move up the river. Here our pilots left their canoe when they came down in the spring, which lying dry, was leaky; so that we being detained some hours, had a good deal of friendly conversation with the family, and eating dinner with them, we made them some small presents. Then putting our baggage in the canoe, some of them pushed slowly up the stream, and the rest of us rode our horses; and swimming them over a creek called Lahawahamunk, we pitched our tent above it, there being a shower in the evening: and in a sense of God's goodness in helping me in my distress, sustaining me under trials and inclining my heart to trust in him, I lay down in an humble, bowed frame of mind, and had a comfortable night's lodging. . . .

On the 17th day, parting from Job Chilaway,[27] we went on and reached Wehaloosing about the middle of the afternoon; and the first Indian we saw was a woman of a modest countenance, with a Bible, who first spake to our guide; and then with a harmonious voice expressed her gladness at seeing us, having before heard of our coming. Then by the direction of our guide we sat down on a log, and he went to the town to tell the people we were come. My companion and I sitting thus together in a deep inward stillness, the poor woman came and sat near us; and great awfulness coming over us, we rejoiced in a sense of God's love manifested to our poor souls. After a while we heard a conch-shell blow several times, and then came John Curtis[28] and another Indian man, who kindly invited us into a house near the town, where we found, I suppose, about sixty people sitting in silence. After sitting a short time, I stood up and in some tenderness of spirit acquainted them with the nature of my visit, and that a concern for their good had made me willing to come thus far to see them; all in a few short sentences, which some of them understanding interpreted to the others, and there appeared gladness amongst them. Then I showed them my certificate,[29] which was explained to them; and the Moravian who overtook us on the way, being now here, bade me welcome.

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[25] This was apparently only a rumor, but four or five days later Forts Presque Isle, Le Boeuf, and Venango, as well as posts at Carlisle and Bedford, all in Pennsylvania, were taken by the Indians.

[26] A mantle or coat, originally of furs, worn by Indians. The word is of Indian origin, but printed and pronounced to appear like an English word.

[27] An Indian from Wehaloosing who understood English and had met and befriended them before.

On the 18th day we rested ourselves in this forenoon; and the Indians knowing that the Moravian and I were of different religious societies, and as some of their people had encouraged him to come and stay awhile with them, were, I believe, concerned that no jarring or discord might be in their meetings; and they I suppose, having conferred together, acquainted me that the people at my request, would at any time come together and hold meetings; and also told me, that they expected the Moravian would speak in their settled meetings, which are commonly held morning and near evening. So I found liberty in my heart to speak to the Moravian, and told him of the care I felt on my mind for the good of these people; and that I believed no ill effects would follow if I sometimes spake in their meetings when love engaged me thereto, without calling them together at times when they did not meet of course: whereupon he expressed his goodwill toward my speaking at any time, all that I found in my heart to say. So near evening I was at their meeting, where the pure Gospel love was felt, to the tendering[30] of some of our hearts; and the interpreters endeavoring to acquaint the people with what I said in short sentences, found some difficulty, as none of them were quite perfect in the English and Delaware tongues, so they helped one another, and we labored along, Divine love attending. Afterward, feeling my mind covered with the spirit of prayer, I told the interpreters that I found it in my heart to pray to God, and believed if I prayed aright, he would hear me, and expressed my willingness for them to omit interpreting; so our meeting ended with a degree of Divine love. Before the people went out, I observed Papunehang, the man who had been zealous in laboring for a reformation in that town, being then very tender,[31] spoke to one of the interpreters; and I was afterward told that he said in substance; "I love to feel where words come from."[32]

On the 19th day and first of the week, this morning in the meeting the Indian who came with the Moravian, being also a member of that society, prayed; and then the Moravian spake a short time to the people. In the afternoon they coming together, and my heart being filled with a heavenly care for their good, I spake to them awhile by interpreters; but none of them being perfect in the work, and I feeling the current of love run strong, told the interpreters that I believed some of the people would understand me, and so I proceeded. In which exercise, I believe the Holy Ghost wrought on some hearts to edification, where all the words were not understood. I looked upon it as a time of divine favor, and my heart was tendered and truly thankful before the Lord; and after I sat down, one of the interpreters seemed spirited[33] to give the Indians the substance of what I had said.

Before our first meeting this morning, I was led to meditate on the manifold difficulties of these Indians,[34] who, by the permission of the Six Nations dwell in these parts; and a near sympathy with them was raised in me, and my heart being enlarged in the love of Christ, I thought that the affectionate care of a good man for his only brother in affliction does not exceed what I then felt for that people. I came to this place through much trouble; and though through the mercies of God, I believed that if I died in the journey, it would be well with me, yet the thoughts of falling into the hands of Indian warriors, were in times of weakness afflicting to me; and being of a tender constitution of body, the thoughts of captivity amongst them were at times grievous; as supposing that they, being strong and hardy, might demand service of me beyond what I could well bear; but the Lord alone was my keeper, and I believed if I went into captivity it would be for some good end; and thus from time to time, my mind was centred in resignation, in which I always found quietness. And now, this day, though I had the same dangerous wilderness between me and home, I was inwardly joyful that the Lord had strengthened me to come on this visit, and manifested a fatherly care over me in my poor lowly condition, when in mine own eyes I appeared inferior to many amongst the Indians.

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[28] An Indian, not mentioned before.

[29] His credentials from the Society of Friends.

[30] the making tender

[31] much moved

[32] This was to Woolman in the line of his Quaker belief that the divine message comes into man's heart direct from its source,—that the spirit may apprehend without words.

[33] inspired, prompted

[34] These were the Delawares, of Algonquin stock, who had been subdued by the Six Nations, or Iroquois, and were allowed by them to live in these parts only upon humiliating terms.

When the last-mentioned meeting was ended, it being night, Papunehang went to bed; and one of the interpreters sitting by me, I observed that Papunehang spake with an harmonious voice, I suppose, a minute or two: and asking the interpreter, was told that "he was expressing his thankfulness to God for the favors he had received that day; and prayed that he would continue to favor him with that same which he had experienced in that meeting." Though Papunehang had before agreed to receive the Moravians and join with them, he still appeared kind and loving to us. . . . .

The 21st day. This morning in meeting my heart was enlarged in pure love amongst them, and in short plain sentences I expressed several things that rested upon me, which one of the interpreters gave the people pretty readily; after which the meeting ended in supplication, and I had cause humbly to acknowledge the loving-kindness of the Lord toward us; and then I believed that a door remained open for the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ to labor amongst these people.

I now feeling my mind at liberty to return, took my leave of them in general, at the conclusion of what I said in meeting; and so we prepared to go homeward: but some of their most active men told us, that when we were ready to move, the people would choose to come and shake hands with us; which those who usually came to meeting did; and from a secret draught[35] in my mind, I went amongst some who did not use to go to meeting, and took my leave of them also.

. . . .

From CHAPTER XI

[*Voyage to England*]

Having been some time under a religious concern[36] to prepare for crossing the seas in order to visit Friends in the northern parts of England, and more particularly in Yorkshire; after weighty consideration, I thought it expedient to inform Friends at our Monthly Meeting at Burlington of it; who having unity with me therein, gave me a certificate. And I afterward communicated the same to our Quarterly Meeting, and they likewise certified their concurrence therewith. Some time after which, at the General Spring Meeting of ministers and elders, I thought it my duty to acquaint them of the religious exercise which attended my mind; with which they likewise signified their unity by a certificate, dated the 24th day of the third month, 1772, directed to Friends in Great Britain. . . .

I believe a communication from one part of the world to some other parts of it by sea is at times consistent with the will of our heavenly Father, and to educate some youth in the practice of sailing, I believe may be right. But how lamentable is the present corruption of the world! how impure are the channels through which trade hath a conveyance! how great is that danger to which poor lads are now exposed, when placed on shipboard to learn the art of sailing!

Five lads training up for the seas were now on board this ship, two of them brought up amongst our Society, and one of whom hath a right amongst Friends, by name James Nayler, to whose father, James Nayler, mentioned in Sewel's[37] History appears to have been uncle. I often feel a tenderness of heart toward these poor lads; and at times look at them as though they were my children according to the flesh.

O that all may take heed and beware of covetousness! O that all may learn of Christ, who was meek and low of heart! then in faithfully following him, he will teach us to be content with food and raiment, without respect to the customs or honors of this world. Men thus redeemed, will feel a tender concern for their fellow creatures, and a desire that those in the lowest stations may be assisted and encouraged; and where owners of ships attain to the perfect law of liberty, and are doers of the word, these will be blessed in their deeds.

A ship at sea commonly sails all night, and the seamen take their watches four hours at a time. Rising to work in the night, is not commonly pleasant in any case; but in dark rainy nights it is very disagreeable, even though each man were furnished with all conveniences. But if men must go out at midnight to help manage the ship in the rain, and having small room to sleep and lay their garments in, are often beset to furnish themselves for the watch; their garments or something relating to their business being wanting, and not easily found, when from the urgency occasioned by high winds, they are hastened and called up suddenly,—here is a trial of patience on the poor sailors, and the poor lads their companions.

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[35] drawing, inclination

[36] solicitude amounting to obligation

[37] Sewel, William: *The History of the Rise, Increase . . . . of the People Called Quakers.* Printed in Dutch, Amsterdam, 1717; in English, London, 1722.

If after they have been on deck several hours in the night and come down into the steerage soaking wet, and are so closely stowed that proper convenience for change of garment is not easily come at, but for want of proper room their wet garments thrown in heaps, and sometimes, through much crowding, are trodden under foot, in going to their lodgings and getting out of them, and great difficulties at times, each one to find his own,—here are trials on the poor sailors.

Now as I have been with them in my lodge,[38] my heart hath often yearned for them, and tender desires been raised in me, that all owners and masters of vessels may dwell in the love of God, and therein act uprightly; and by seeking less for gain, and looking carefully to their ways, may earnestly labor to remove all cause of provocation from the poor seamen, either to fret or use excess of strong drink; for indeed the poor creatures at times, in the wet and cold, seem to apply to strong drink to supply the want of other conveniences. Great reformation in the world is wanting, and the necessity of it amongst those who do business on great waters, hath at this time been abundantly opened before me.

The 8th day of the fifth month. This morning the clouds gathered, the wind blew strong from the south-eastward, and before noon increased to a degree that sailing appeared dangerous. The seamen then bound up some of their sails and took down some; and the storm increasing, they put the dead lights, so called, into the cabin windows, and lighted a lamp as at night. The wind now blew vehemently, and the sea wrought to such a degree that an awful seriousness prevailed in the cabin, in which I spent, I believe, about seventeen hours; for I believed the poor wet toiling seamen had need of all the room in the crowded steerage, and the cabin passengers had given me frequent invitations. They ceased now from sailing, and put the vessel in the posture called lying-to.

My mind in this tempest, through the gracious assistance of the Lord, was preserved in a good degree of resignation; and I felt at times a few words in his love to my ship-mates, in regard to the all-sufficiency of Him who formed the great deep, and whose care is so extensive that a sparrow falls not without his notice. Thus in a tender frame of mind I spoke to them of the necessity of our yielding, in true obedience, to the instructions of our heavenly Father, who sometimes through adversities intendeth our refinement.

About eleven o'clock at night I went out on the deck, when the sea wrought exceedingly, and the high foaming waves, all around, had in some sort the appearance of fire, but did not give much, if any, light. The sailor then at the helm said he lately saw a corposant[39] at the head of the mast. About this time I observed the master of the ship ordered the carpenter to keep on the deck; and though he said little, I apprehended his care was that the carpenter with his axe might be in readiness in case of any extremity. Soon after this, the vehemency of the wind abated, and before morning they again put the ship under sail.

. . . .

The 2nd day of the sixth month. Last evening the seamen found bottom at about seventy fathoms. This morning there was a fair wind, and pleasant. And as I sat on deck my heart was overcome with the love of Christ and melted into contrition before him; and in this state, the prospect of that work, to which I have felt my mind drawn when in my native land, being in some degree opened before me, I felt like a little child; and my cries were put up to my heavenly Father for preservation, that in an humble dependence on him, my soul may be strengthened in his love, and kept inwardly waiting for his counsel.

This afternoon we saw that part of England called the Lizard. Some dunghill fowls yet remained of those the passengers took for their sea-store: I believe about fourteen perished in the storms at sea, by the waves breaking over the quarter-deck, and a considerable number with sickness, at different times. I observed the cocks crew coming down the Delaware, and while we were near the land; but afterward, I think I did not hear one of them crow till we came near the land in England, when they again crowed a few times.

In observing their dull appearance at sea, and the pining sickness of some of them, I often remembered the fountain of goodness, who gave being to all creatures, and whose love extends to that of caring for the sparrows; and I believe where the love of God is verily perfected, and the true spirit of government watchfully attended to, a tenderness toward all creatures made subject to us will be experienced, and a care felt in us that we do not lessen that sweetness of life, in the animal creation, which the great Creator intends for them under our government.

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[38] He took passage in the forecastle, with the sailors, going on board May 1, 1772.

[39] A ball of light, sometimes seen at a masthead during a storm.

The 4th day of the month. Wet weather, high winds, and so dark that we could see but a little way. I perceived our seamen were apprehensive of missing the channel which I understood was narrow. In a while it grew lighter, and they saw the land, and they knew where we were. Thus the Father of mercies was pleased to try us with the sight of dangers, and then graciously from time to time deliver from them; thus sparing our lives, that in humility and reverence we may walk before him, and put our trust in him.

About noon a pilot came off from Dover, where my beloved friend Samuel Emlen[40] went on shore, and thence to London, about seventy-two miles by land; but I felt easy in staying in the ship.

The 7th day of the month, and first of the week. . . . Had a head wind up the Thames; lay sometimes at anchor, and saw many ships passing, and some at anchor near, and had large opportunity of feeling the spirit in which the poor bewildered sailors too generally live. That lamentable degeneracy, which so much prevails among the people employed on the seas, so affected my heart that I may not easily convey to another the feeling I have had.

The present state of the sea-faring life in general, appears so opposite to that of a pious education; so full of corruption, and extreme alienation from God; so full of examples the most dangerous to young people, that in looking toward a young generation, I feel a care for them, that they may have an education different from the present education of lads at sea; and that all of us who are acquainted with the pure Gospel spirit, may lay this case to heart, may remember the lamentable corruptions which attend the conveyance of merchandise across the seas, and so abide in the love of Christ, that being delivered from the love of money, from the entangling expenses of a curious, delicate, and luxurious life, we may learn contentment with a little; and promote the sea-faring life no further, than that spirit which leads into all truth attends us in our proceedings.

. . . .

From CHAPTER XII

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[*An Experience During Sickness*]

In a time of sickness with the pleurisy, a little upward of two years and a half ago, I was brought so near the gates of death that I forgot my name: being then desirous to know who I was, I saw a mass of matter of a dull gloomy color, between the south and the east, and was informed that this mass was human beings in as great misery as they could be, and live; and that I was mixed in with them, and that henceforth I might not consider myself as a distinct or separate being. In this state I remained several hours. I then heard a soft melodious voice, more pure and harmonious than any I had heard before with my ears. I believed it was the voice of an angel who spake to the other angels, and the words were these, *John Woolman is dead.* I soon remembered that I once was John Woolman; and being assured that I was alive in the body, I greatly wondered what that heavenly voice could mean. I believed beyond doubting that it was the voice of an holy angel; but as yet it was a mystery to me.

I was then carried in spirit to the mines where poor oppressed people were digging rich treasures for those called Christians; and I heard them blaspheme the name of Christ, at which I was grieved; for his name to me was precious. Then I was informed, that these heathens were told that those who oppressed them were the followers of Christ; and they said amongst themselves, "If Christ directed them to use us in this sort, then Christ is a cruel tyrant." All this time the song of the angel remained a mystery; and in the morning, my dear wife and some others coming to my bed-side, I asked them if they knew who I was; and they telling me I was John Woolman, thought I was light-headed: for I told them not what the angel said, nor was I disposed to talk much to any one, but was very desirous to get so deep that I might understand this mystery.

My tongue was often so dry that I could not speak till I had moved it about and gathered some moisture, and as I lay still for a time, at length I felt Divine power prepare my mouth that I could speak; and then I said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh, is by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

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[40] The friend with whom he had crossed.

Then the mystery was opened; and I perceived there was joy in heaven over a sinner who had repented; and that that language (John Woolman is dead) meant no more than the death of my own will.[41]

. . . .

[CLEANLINESS]

Having of late traveled[42] often in wet weather through narrow streets in towns and villages where were dirtiness under foot, and the scent arising from that filth which more or less infects the air of all thickly settled disagreeable towns, and I being but weakly, have felt distress both in body and mind, with that which is impure.

In these journeys I have been where much cloth hath been dyed, and sundry times walked over ground where much of the dye stuffs have drained away. Here I have felt a longing in my mind that people might come into cleanness of spirit, cleanness of person, and cleanness about their houses and garments. Some who are great carry delicacy to a great height themselves, and yet real cleanliness is not generally promoted. Dyes being invented partly to please the eye and partly to hide dirt, I have felt in this weak state, traveling in dirtiness and affected with unwholesome scents, a strong desire that the practice of dyeing cloth to hide dirt may be more fully considered. To hide dirt in our garments appears opposite to real cleanliness. To wash garments and keep them sweet, appears cleanly. Through giving way to hiding dirt in our garments, a spirit which would cover that which is disagreeable is strengthened. Real cleanness becometh a holy people, but hiding that which is not clean by coloring our garments appears contrary to the sweetness of sincerity. Through some sorts of dyes, cloth is less useful; and if the value of dye-stuffs, the expense of dyeing, and the damage done to cloth were all added together, and that expense applied to keep all sweet and clean, how much more cleanly would people be.

1756-1772 1774-5

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Born, Boston, 1706, died, Philadelphia, 1790. Franklin's services at home and abroad were rendered in the spirit of a practical philanthropist and public servant. His interests extended from the sweeping of streets, the warming of houses, the founding of schools and libraries, to experiments in and application of electric science, and to the affairs of nations. He was agent in London for the colonies of Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Georgia, and general spokesman for America before the British government. He was one of the committee to draft the Declaration of Independence. Almost immediately he was sent as special agent to France, where, largely through his wit, good sense, and personal popularity, he was of inestimable service to the colonies. Here he had some opportunity to indulge his taste for imaginative literature, and the "bagatelles," such as the *Dialogue* printed below, show that had he been able earlier to develop these tastes, he might have greatly increased his scope of interests and his grace of style. America will always be debtor to Franklin's forward-looking, constructive bent of mind, his keenly curious and balanced intellect. Franklin was made member and medalist of the Royal Society, 1753, LL.D. of the universities of Edinburgh and Oxford, 1762, and president (governor) of Pennsylvania, 1785-1788.

From his AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Twyford at the Bishop of St. Asaph's, 1771

Dear Son:[1] I have ever had pleasure in obtaining any little anecdotes of my ancestors. You may remember the inquiries I made among the remains of my relations when you were with me in England, and the journey I undertook for that purpose. Imagining it may be equally agreeable to you to know the circumstances of my life, many of which you are yet unacquainted with, and expecting the enjoyment of a week's uninterrupted leisure in my present country retirement,[2] I sit down to write them for you. To which I have besides some other inducements. Having emerged from the poverty and obscurity in which I was born and bred, to a state of affluence and some degree of reputation in the world, and having gone so far through life with a considerable share of felicity, the conducing means I made use of, which with the blessing of God so well succeeded, my posterity may like to know, as they may find some of them suitable to their own situations, and therefore fit to be imitated.

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[41] However this experience might be explained and classified by psychology, to Woolman it was of vital importance.

[42] In England. These paragraphs are under the last date of entry in his journal. Three weeks later he died of smallpox.

[1] Franklin wrote his autobiography during short intervals of leisure in the last twenty years of his life. The first parts, addressed to his son, William Franklin, royalist governor of New Jersey, were intended for his family only. The latter parts were written for possible publication. Though written with no artistic intent, the book is of absorbing interest, truly modern in spirit, and truly native to the soil.

[2] As guest of Dr. Jonathan Shipley, bishop of St. Asaph's, at Twyford, Hampshire, England.

That felicity, when I reflected on it, has induced me sometimes to say, that were it offered to my choice, I should have no objection to a repetition of the same life from its beginning, only asking the advantages authors have in a second edition to correct some faults of the first. So I might, besides correcting the faults, change some sinister accidents and events of it for others more favorable. But though this were denied, I should still accept the offer. Since such a repetition is not to be expected, the next thing most like living one's life over again seems to be a recollection of that life, and to make that recollection as durable as possible by putting it down in writing.

Hereby, too, I shall indulge the inclination so natural in old men, to be talking of themselves and their own past actions; and I shall indulge it without being tiresome to others, who, through respect to age, might conceive themselves obliged to give me a hearing, since this may be read or not as anyone pleases. And, lastly (I may as well confess it, since my denial of it will be believed by nobody), perhaps I shall a good deal gratify my own *vanity.* Indeed, I scarce ever heard or saw the introductory words, *"Without vanity I may say,"* etc., but some vain thing immediately followed. Most people dislike vanity in others, whatever share they have of it themselves; but I give it fair quarter wherever I meet with it, being persuaded that it is often productive of good to the possessor, and to others that are within his sphere of action; and therefore in many cases, it would not be altogether absurd if a man were to thank God for his vanity among the other comforts of life. . . .

Josiah, my father, married young, and carried his wife with three children into New England, about 1682. The conventicles[3] having been forbidden by law, and frequently disturbed, induced some considerable men of his acquaintance to remove to that country, and he was prevailed with to accompany them thither, where they expected to enjoy their mode of religion with freedom. By the same wife he had four children more born there, and by a second wife ten more, in all seventeen; of which I remember thirteen sitting at one time at his table, who all grew up to be men and women, and married; I was the youngest son, and the youngest child but two, and was born in Boston, New England. My mother, the second wife, was Abiah Folger, daughter of Peter Folger, one of the first settlers of New England, of whom honorable mention is made by Cotton Mather, in his church history of that country, entitled *Magnalia Christi Americana,* as *"a godly, learned Englishman,"* if I remember the words rightly. I have heard that he wrote sundry small occasional pieces, but only one of them was printed, which I saw now many years since. It was written in 1675, in the homespun verse of that time and people, and addressed to those then concerned in the government there. It was in favor of liberty of conscience, and in behalf of the Baptists, Quakers, and other sectaries that had been under persecution, ascribing the Indian wars, and other distresses that had befallen the country, to that persecution, as so many judgments of God to punish so heinous an offense, and exhorting a repeal of those uncharitable laws. The whole appeared to me as written with a good deal of decent plainness and manly freedom. The six concluding lines I remember, though I have forgotten the two first of the stanza; but the purport of them was, that his censures proceeded from good-will, and therefore he would be known to be the author.

"Because to be a libeller (says he)
  I hate it with my heart;
From Sherburne town, where now I dwell
  My name I do put here;
Without offense your real friend,
  It is Peter Folgier."

My elder brothers were all put apprentices to different trades. I was put to the grammar school at eight years of age, my father intending to devote me, as the tithe[4] of his sons, to the service of the Church. My early readiness in learning to read (which must have been very early, as I do not remember when I could not read), and the opinion of all his friends that I should certainly make a good scholar, encouraged him in this purpose of his. My uncle Benjamin, too, approved of it, and proposed to give me all his short-hand volumes of sermons, I suppose as a stock to set up with, if I would learn his character.[5] I continued, however, at the grammar school not quite one year, though in that time I had risen gradually from the middle of the class of that year to be the head of it, and farther was removed into the next class above it, in order to go with that into the third at the end of the year. But my father, in the mean time, from a view of the expense of a college education, which having so large a family he could not well afford, and the mean living many so educated were afterwards able to obtain—reasons that he gave to his friends in my hearing—altered his first intention, took me from the grammar school, and sent me to a school for writing and arithmetic, kept by a then famous man, Mr. George Brownell, very successful in his profession generally, and that by mild, encouraging methods. Under him I acquired fair writing pretty soon, but I failed in the arithmetic, and made no progress in it. At ten years old I was taken home to assist my father in his business, which was that of a tallow-chandler and soap-boiler; a business he was not bred to, but had assumed on his arrival in New England, and on finding his dyeing trade would not maintain his family, being in little request. Accordingly, I was employed in cutting wick for the candles, filling the dipping mould and the moulds for cast candles, attending the shop, going of errands, etc.

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[3] Religious meetings, especially of persons dissenting from doctrines of the church of England.

[4] tenth, or one of ten (In reference to the Jewish custom of giving to Jehovah one tenth of all income.)

[5] system of short-hand

I disliked the trade, and had a strong inclination for the sea, but my father declared against it; however, living near the water, I was much in and about it, learned early to swim well, and to manage boats; and when in a boat or canoe with other boys, I was commonly allowed to govern, especially in any case of difficulty; and upon other occasions I was generally a leader among the boys, and sometimes led them into scrapes, of which I will mention one instance, as it shows an early projecting public spirit, though not then justly conducted.

There was a salt-marsh that bounded part of the mill-pond, on the edge of which, at high water, we used to stand to fish for minnows. By much trampling, we had made it a mere quagmire. My proposal was to build a wharf there fit for us to stand upon, and I showed my comrades a large heap of stones, which were intended for a new house near the marsh, and which would very well suit our purpose. Accordingly, in the evening, when the workmen were gone, I assembled a number of my play-fellows, and working with them diligently, like so many emmets, sometimes two or three to a stone, we brought them all away and built our little wharf. The next morning the workmen were surprised at missing the stones, which were found in our wharf. Inquiry was made after the removers; we were discovered and complained of; several of us were corrected by our fathers; and, though I pleaded the usefulness of the work, mine convinced me that nothing was useful which was not honest.

I think you may like to know something of his person and character. He had an excellent constitution of body, was of middle stature, but well set, and very strong; he was ingenious, could draw prettily, was skilled a little in music, and had a clear, pleasing voice, so that when he played psalm tunes on his violin and sung withal, as he sometimes did in an evening after the business of the day was over, it was extremely agreeable to hear. He had a mechanical genius, too, and, on occasion, was very handy in the use of other tradesmen's tools; but his great excellence lay in a sound understanding and solid judgment in prudential matters, both in private and public affairs. In the latter, indeed, he was never employed, the numerous family he had to educate and the straitness of his circumstances keeping him close to his trade; but I remember well his being frequently visited by leading people, who consulted him for his opinion in affairs of the town or of the church he belonged to, and showed a good deal of respect for his judgment and advice; he was also much consulted by private persons about their affairs when any difficulty occurred, and frequently chosen an arbitrator between contending parties. At his table he liked to have, as often as he could, some sensible friend or neighbor to converse with, and always took care to start some ingenious or useful topic for discourse, which might tend to improve the minds of his children. By this means he turned our attention to what was good, just, and prudent in the conduct of life; and little or no notice was ever taken of what related to the victuals on the table, whether it was well or ill dressed, in or out of season, of good or bad flavor, preferable or inferior to this or that other thing of the kind, so that I was brought up in such a perfect inattention to those matters as to be quite indifferent what kind of food was set before me, and so unobservant of it, that to this day if I am asked I can scarce tell a few hours after dinner what I dined upon. This has been a convenience to me in traveling, where my companions have been sometimes very unhappy for want of a suitable gratification of their more delicate, because better instructed, tastes and appetites.

My mother had likewise an excellent constitution; she suckled all her ten children. I never knew either my father or mother to have any sickness but that of which they died, he at 89, and she at 85 years of age. They lie buried together at Boston, where I some years since placed a marble over their grave, with this inscription:

Josiah Franklin,
and
Abiah his wife,
lie here interred.
They lived lovingly together in wedlock
fifty-five years.
Without an estate, or any gainful employment,
by constant labor and industry,
with God's blessing,
they maintained a large family
comfortably,
and brought up thirteen children
and seven grandchildren
reputably.
From this instance, reader,
be encouraged to diligence in thy calling,
and distrust not Providence.
He was a pious and prudent man;
she, a discreet and virtuous woman.
Their youngest son,
in filial regard to their memory,
places this stone.
J. F. born 1655, died 1744, Ætat 89.
A. F. born 1667, died 1752, —— 85.

By my rambling digressions I perceive myself to be grown old. I used to write more methodically. But one does not dress for private company as for a public ball. 'Tis perhaps only negligence.

To return: I continued thus employed in my father's business for two years, that is, till I was twelve years old; and my brother John, who was bred to that business, having left my father, married, and set up for himself at Rhode Island, there was all appearance that I was destined to supply his place, and become a tallow-chandler. But my dislike to the trade continuing, my father was under apprehensions that if he did not find one for me more agreeable, I should break away and get to sea, as his son Josiah had done, to his great vexation. He therefore sometimes took me to walk with him, and see joiners, bricklayers, turners, braziers, etc., at their work, that he might observe my inclination, and endeavor to fix it on some trade or other on land. It has ever since been a pleasure to me to see good workmen handle their tools, and it has been useful to me, having learned so much by it as to be able to do little jobs myself in my house when a workman could not readily be got, and to construct little machines for my experiments, while the intention of making the experiment was fresh and warm in my mind. My father at last fixed upon the cutler's trade, and my uncle Benjamin's son Samuel, who was bred to that business in London, being about that time established in Boston, I was sent to be with him some time on liking. But his expectations of a fee[6] with me displeasing my father, I was taken home again.

From a child I was fond of reading, and all the little money that came into my hands was ever laid out in books. Pleased with the *Pilgrim's Progress,* my first collection was of John Bunyan's works in separate little volumes. I afterward sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's *Historical Collections;* they were small chapmen's[7] books, and cheap, 40 or 50 in all. My father's little library consisted chiefly of books in polemic divinity, most of which I read, and have since often regretted that, at a time when I had such a thirst for knowledge, more proper books had not fallen in my way, since it was now resolved I should not be a clergyman. Plutarch's *Lives* there was in which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great advantage. There was also a book of Defoe's, called an *Essay on Projects,* and another of Dr. Mather's called *Essays to do Good,*[8] which perhaps gave me a turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future events of my life.

This bookish inclination at length determined my father to make me a printer, though he had already one son (James) of that profession. In 1717 my brother James returned from England with a press and letters to set up his business in Boston. I liked it much better than that of my father, but still had a hankering for the sea. To prevent the apprehended effect of such an inclination, my father was impatient to have me bound to my brother. I stood out some time, but at last was persuaded, and signed the indentures when I was yet but twelve years old. I was to serve as an apprentice till I was twenty-one years of age, only I was to be allowed journeyman's wages during the last year. In a little time I made great proficiency in the business, and became a useful hand to my brother. I now had access to better books. An acquaintance with the apprentices of booksellers enabled me sometimes to borrow a small one, which I was careful to return soon and clean. Often I sat up in my room reading the greatest part of the night, when the book was borrowed in the evening and to be returned early in the morning, lest it should be missed or wanted.

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[6] Apprentices or their guardians were often required to pay a fee to the master served, in addition to the services rendered.

[7] 'peddlers'

[8] The title is *Bonifacius. An Essay,* etc.

And after some time an ingenious tradesman,[9] Mr. Matthew Adams, who had a pretty[10] collection of books, and who frequented our printing-house, took notice of me, invited me to his library, and very kindly lent me such books as I chose to read. I now took a fancy to poetry, and made some little pieces; my brother, thinking it might turn to account, encouraged me, and put me on composing occasional ballads. One was called *The Lighthouse Tragedy,* and contained an account of the drowning of Captain Worthilake, with his two daughters; the other was a sailor's song, on the taking of Teach[11] (or Blackbeard) the pirate. They were wretched stuff, in the Grub-street-ballad style;[12] and when they were printed he sent me about the town to sell them. The first sold wonderfully, the event being recent, having made a great noise. This flattered my vanity; but my father discouraged me by ridiculing my performances, and telling me verse-makers were generally beggars. So I escaped being a poet, most probably a very bad one; but as prose writing has been of great use to me in the course of my life, and was a principal means of my advancement, I shall tell you how, in such a situation, I acquired what little ability I have in that way.

There was another bookish lad in the town, John Collins by name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of argument, and very desirous of confuting one another, which disputatious turn, by the way, is apt to become a very bad habit, making people often extremely disagreeable in company by the contradiction that is necessary to bring it into practice; and thence, besides souring and spoiling the conversation, is productive of disgusts and perhaps enmities where you may have occasion for friendship. I had caught it by reading my father's books of dispute about religion. Persons of good sense, I have since observed, seldom fall into it, except lawyers, university men, and men of all sorts that have been bred at Edinburgh.[13]

A question was once, somehow or other, started between Collins and me, of the propriety of educating the female sex in learning, and their abilities for study.[14] He was of opinion that it was improper, and that they were naturally unequal to it. I took the contrary side, perhaps a little for dispute's sake. He was naturally more eloquent, had a ready plenty of words; and sometimes, as I thought, bore me down more by his fluency than by the strength of his reasons. As we parted without settling the point, and were not to see one another again for some time, I sat down to put my arguments in writing, which I copied fair and sent to him. He answered, and I replied. Three or four letters of a side had passed, when my father happened to find my papers and read them. Without entering into the discussion, he took occasion to talk to me about the manner of my writing; observed that, though I had the advantage of my antagonist in correct spelling and pointing (which I owed to the printing-house), I fell far short in elegance of expression, in method, and in perspicuity, of which he convinced me by several instances. I saw the justice of his remarks, and thence grew more attentive to the manner in writing, and determined to endeavor at improvement.

About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator.* It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With this view I took some of the papers, and, making short hints of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, tried to complete the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them.[15] But I found I wanted[16] a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual occasion for words of the same import, but of different length, to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rime, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me master of it. Therefore I took some of the tales and turned them into verse; and, after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collections of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them into the best order, before I began to form the full sentences and complete the paper. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of thoughts. By comparing my work afterwards with the original, I discovered many faults and amended them; but I sometimes had the pleasure of fancying that, in certain particulars of small import, I had been lucky enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think I might possibly in time come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious. My time for these exercises and for reading was at night, after work, or before it began in the morning, or on Sundays. . . .

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[9] intelligent shopkeeper or, perhaps, mechanic

[10] rather fine

[11] Edward Teach or Thatch, "Blackbeard," was trapped and killed on the Carolina coast in 1718.

[12] In the style of the hack writers who lived in Grub Street, London.

[13] Even the good-natured Franklin must have a characteristic eighteenth century fling at the Scotch.

[14] Perhaps Franklin got the idea from Defoe's *Essay on Projects,* London, 1697.

And now it was that, being on some occasion made ashamed of my ignorance in figures, which I had twice failed in learning when at school, I took Cocker's book of arithmetic, and went through the whole by myself with great ease. I also read Seller's and Shermy's books of navigation, and became acquainted with the little geometry they contain; but never proceeded far in that science. And I read about this time Locke[17] *On Human Understanding*, and the *Art of Thinking*, by Messrs. du Port Royal.[18]

While I was intent on improving my language, I met with an English grammar (I think it was Greenwood's), at the end of which there were two little sketches of the arts of rhetoric and logic, the latter finishing with a specimen of a dispute in the Socratic method; and soon after I procured Xenophon's *Memorable Things of Socrates*, wherein there are many instances of the same method. I was charmed with it, adopted it, dropped my abrupt contradiction and positive argumentation, and put on the humble inquirer and doubter. And being then, from reading Shaftesbury and Collins,[19] become a real doubter in many points of our religious doctrine,[20] I found this method safest for myself and very embarrassing to those against whom I used it; therefore I took a delight in it, practiced it continually, and grew very artful and expert in drawing people, even of superior knowledge, into concessions, the consequences of which they did not foresee, entangling them in difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining victories that neither myself nor my cause always deserved. I continued this method some few years, but gradually left it, retaining only the habit of expressing myself in terms of modest diffidence; never using, when I advanced anything that may possibly be disputed, the words *certainly, undoubtedly*, or any others that give the air of positiveness to an opinion; but rather say, I conceive or apprehend a thing to be so and so; it appears to me, or *I should think it so or so*, for such and such reasons; or *I imagine it to be so;* or *it is so, if I am not mistaken.* This habit, I believe, has been of great advantage to me when I have had occasion to inculcate my opinions, and persuade men into measures that I have been from time to time engaged in promoting; and, as the chief ends of conversation are to *inform* or to be *informed*, to *please* or to *persuade*, I wish well-meaning, sensible men would not lessen their power of doing good by a positive, assuming manner, that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create opposition, and to defeat every one of those purposes for which speech was given to us, to wit, giving or receiving information or pleasure. For if you would inform, a positive and dogmatical manner in advancing your sentiments may provoke contradiction and prevent a candid attention. If you wish information and improvement from the knowledge of others, and yet at the same time express yourself as firmly fixed in your present opinions, modest, sensible men who do not love disputation will probably leave you undisturbed in the possession of your error. And by such a manner you can seldom hope to recommend yourself in *pleasing* your hearers, or to persuade those whose concurrence you desire.

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[15] Sixty years later, Samuel Johnson in his life of Addison said, "Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison." Franklin does not attain to the grace and urbanity of Addison, but the manly vigor and directness of his style is enough to make his work distinctive.

[16] lacked

[17] John Locke (1632-1704). The *Essay* is fundamental in its analysis of the mind and was the inspirer of modern philosophical method.

[18] The Messrs. du Port Royal were a number of French religious recluses of the seventeenth century whose philosophical works were well known in Europe.

[19] The Earl of Shaftesbury and Anthony Collins, eighteenth century philosophical writers of the rationalistic or deistic school. By the strictly orthodox philosophers they were regarded as little better than infidels.

[20] Even without reading Shaftesbury and Collins, Franklin's mind would doubtless have rejected such religious doctrine as is shown in Michael Wigglesworth's *Day of Doom* (cf. pp. 44-49).

. . . .

I have been the more particular in this description of my journey,[21] and shall be so of my first entry into that city, that you may in your mind compare such unlikely beginnings with the figure I have since made there. I was in my working dress, my best clothes being to come round by sea. I was dirty from my journey; my pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no soul nor where to look for lodging. I was fatigued with traveling, rowing, and want of rest. I was very hungry; and my whole stock of cash consisted of a Dutch dollar, and about a shilling in copper. The latter I gave the people of the boat for my passage, who at first refused it on account of my rowing; but I insisted on their taking it. A man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little money than when he has plenty, perhaps through fear of being thought to have but little.

Then I walked up the street, gazing about till near the market-house I met a boy with bread. I had made many a meal on bread, and, inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to, in Second Street, and asked for biscuit, intending such as we had in Boston; but they, it seems, were not made in Philadelphia. Then I asked for a three-penny loaf, and was told they had none such. So not considering or knowing the difference of money,[22] and the greater cheapness nor the names of his bread, I bade him give me three-penny worth of any sort. He gave me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surprised at the quantity, but took it, and, having no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market Street as far as Fourth Street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chestnut Street and part of Walnut Street, eating my roll all the way, and coming round, found myself again at Market Street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go farther.

Thus refreshed, I walked again up the street, which by this time had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way. I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meeting-house of the Quakers near the market. I sat down among them, and after looking round a while and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy through labor and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continued so till the meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me. This was, therefore, the first house I was in or slept in, in Philadelphia.

. . . .

I believe I have omitted mentioning that, in my first voyage from Boston, being becalmed off Block Island, our people set about catching cod, and hauled up a great many. Hitherto I had stuck to my resolution of not eating animal food, and on this occasion I considered, with my master Tryon,[23] the taking every fish as a kind of unprovoked murder, since none of them had, or ever could do us any injury that might justify the slaughter. All this seemed very reasonable. But I had formerly been a great lover of fish, and when this came hot out of the frying-pan, it smelt admirably well. I balanced some time between principle and inclination, till I recollected that, when the fish were opened, I saw smaller fish taken out of their stomachs; then thought I, "If you eat one another, I don't see why we mayn't eat you." So I dined upon cod very heartily, and continued to eat with other people, returning only now and then occasionally to a vegetable diet. So convenient a thing it is to be a *reasonable creature,* since it enables one to find or make a reason for everything one has a mind to do.

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[21] Franklin's printer brother, James, to whom he was bound apprentice and who was a hard master, fell out with the Boston authorities, who ordered "that James Franklin should no longer print the paper called *The New England Courant.*" Releasing Benjamin from his apprenticeship, he continued to print the paper, but in the younger brother's name. He treated Benjamin so severely, however, that the lad, now seventeen years old, ran away by sea to New York to seek his fortune. The city must then have been about as Madam Knight describes it (cf. pp. 71-2). Not finding work here, but hearing of possible employment in Philadelphia, he pushed on afoot across New Jersey. The paragraph finds him just arrived in the Quaker city.

[22] There was so little English money in colonial circulation that there was no fixed standard of exchange. Expensive transportation made bread dearer in Boston than in Philadelphia, which was surrounded by fertile lands.

[23] A vegetarian propagandist whose system Franklin had been following.

. . . .

. . . I now began to think[24] of getting a little money beforehand, and, expecting better work, I left Palmer's to work at Watt's, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, a still greater printing-house. Here I continued all the rest of my stay in London.

At my first admission into this printing-house I took to working at press, imagining I felt a want of the bodily exercise I had been used to in America, where presswork is mixed with composing. I drank only water; the other workmen, near fifty in number, were great guzzlers of beer. On occasion, I carried up and down stairs a large form of types in each hand, when others carried but one in both hands. They wondered to see, from this and several instances, that the *Water-American,* as they called me, was *stronger* than themselves, who drank *strong* beer! We had an alehouse boy who attended always in the house to supply the workmen. My companion at the press drank every day a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast with his bread and cheese, a pint between breakfast and dinner, a pint at dinner, a pint in the afternoon about six o'clock, and another when he had done his day's work. I thought it a detestable custom; but it was necessary, he supposed, to drink *strong* beer, that he might be *strong* to labor. I endeavored to convince him that the bodily strength afforded by beer could only be in proportion to the grain or flour of the barley dissolved in the water of which it was made; that there was more flour in a pennyworth of bread; and therefore, if he would eat that with a pint of water, it would give him more strength than a quart of beer. He drank on, however, and had four or five shillings to pay out of his wages every Saturday night for that muddling liquor; an expense I was free from. And thus these poor devils keep themselves always under.

Watts, after some weeks, desiring to have me in the composing-room, I left the pressmen; a new *bien venu*[25] or sum for drink, being five shillings, was demanded of me by the compositors. I thought it an imposition, as I had paid below; the master thought so too, and forbad my paying it. I stood out two or three weeks, was accordingly considered as an excommunicate, and had so many little pieces of private mischief done me, by mixing my sorts,[26] transposing my pages, breaking my matter,[27] etc., etc., if I were ever so little out of the room, and all ascribed to the chapel[28] ghost, which they said ever haunted those not regularly admitted, that, notwithstanding the master's protection, I found myself obliged to comply and pay the money, convinced of the folly of being on ill terms with those one is to live with continually.

I was now on a fair footing with them, and soon acquired considerable influence. I proposed some reasonable alterations in their chapel laws, and carried them against all opposition. From my example, a great part of them left their muddling breakfast of beer, and bread, and cheese, finding they could with me, be supplied from a neighboring house with a large porringer of hot water-gruel, sprinkled with pepper, crumbed with bread, and a bit of butter in it, for the price of a pint of beer, viz., three halfpence. This was a more comfortable as well as cheaper breakfast, and kept their heads clearer. Those who continued sotting with beer all day were often, by not paying, out of credit at the alehouse, and used to make interest with me to get beer; their *light,* as they phrased it, *being out.* I watched the pay-table on Saturday night, and collected what I stood engaged for them, having to pay sometimes near thirty shillings a week on their accounts. This, and my being esteemed a pretty good *riggite,* that is, a jocular verbal satirist, supported my consequence in the society. My constant attendance (I never making a St. Monday[29]) recommended me to the master; and my uncommon quickness at composing occasioned my being put upon all work of dispatch, which was generally better paid. So I went on now very agreeably.

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[24] Meanwhile Franklin had been befriended by Sir William Keith, governor of the province, a man "who wished to please everybody." He induced Franklin to go to London to procure for himself a new printing outfit on Keith's credit. Arriving in London, Franklin found that Keith had no credit there. He at once turned to his trade, however, earned and saved money, and, boy though he was,—he had not yet reached his majority—made the acquaintance of such men as Sir Hans Sloane, afterwards founder of the British Museum, and Dr. Mandeville, author of *The Fable of the Bees.* The whole experience was greatly educative to the lad.

[25] welcome

[26] kinds of type

[27] What he had composed.

[28] A printer's cant name for a printing-house.

. . . .

Before I enter upon my public appearance in business, it may be well to let you know the then state of my mind with regard to my principles and morals, that you may see how far those influenced the future events of my life. My parents had early given me religious impressions, and brought me through my childhood piously in the Dissenting way. But I was scarce fifteen when, after doubting by turns of several points, as I found them disputed in the different books I read, I began to doubt of revelation itself. Some books against deism fell into my hands; they were said to be the substance of sermons preached at Boyle's Lectures. It happened that they wrought an effect on me quite contrary to what was intended by them; for the arguments of the deists, which were quoted to be refuted, appeared to me much stronger than the refutations; in short, I soon became a thorough deist. My arguments perverted some others, particularly Collins and Ralph; but each of them having afterwards wronged me greatly without the least compunction, and recollecting Keith's conduct towards me (who was another freethinker), and my own towards Vernon and Miss Read, which at times gave me great trouble, I began to suspect that this doctrine, though it might be true, was not very useful. My London pamphlet, which had for its motto these lines of Dryden:

> "Whatever is, is right. Though purblind man
> Sees but a part o' the chain, the nearest link:
> His eyes not carrying to the equal beam,
> That poises all above";[30]

and from the attributes of God, his infinite wisdom, goodness, and power, concluded that nothing could possibly be wrong in the world, and that vice and virtue were empty distinctions, no such things existing, appeared now not so clever a performance as I once thought it; and I doubted whether some error had not insinuated itself unperceived into my argument, so as to infect all that followed, as is common in metaphysical reasonings.

I grew convinced that *truth, sincerity,* and *integrity* in dealings between man and man were of the utmost importance to the felicity of life; and I formed written resolutions, which still remain in my journal book, to practice them ever while I lived. Revelation had indeed no weight with me, as such; but I entertained an opinion that, though certain actions might not be bad *because* they were forbidden by it, or good *because* it commanded them, yet probably these actions might be forbidden *because* they were bad for us, or commanded *because* they were beneficial to us, in their own natures, all the circumstances of things considered. And this persuasion, with the kind hand of Providence, or some guardian angel, or accidental favorable circumstances and situations, or all together, preserved me, through this dangerous time of youth, and the hazardous situations I was sometimes in among strangers, remote from the eye and advice of my father, without any willful gross immorality or injustice, that might have been expected from my want of religion. I say willful, because the instances I have mentioned had something of *necessity* in them, from my youth, inexperience, and the knavery of others. I had, therefore, a tolerable character to begin the world with; I valued it properly, and determined to preserve it.

. . . .

It was about this time[31] I conceived the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wished to live without committing any fault at any time; I would conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found I had undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined. While my care was employed in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another; habit took the advantage of inattention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded, at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous was not sufficient to prevent our slipping; and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I therefore contrived the following method.

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[29] A holiday after a Sunday's drinking spree: jocularly, as if a saint's day.

[30] Franklin quotes inaccurately. The passage is,—

> Whatever is, is in its causes just;
> Since all things are by fate. But purblind man
> Sees but a part o' the chain; the nearest links;
> His eyes not carrying to that equal beam,
> That poises above all.
>
> Dryden. *Œdipus*, III. i. 284.

[31] Franklin was now back in Philadelphia, married, and settled in business.

In the various enumerations of the moral virtues I had met with in my reading, I found the catalogue more or less numerous, as different writers included more or fewer ideas under the same name. Temperance, for example, was by some confined to eating and drinking, while by others it was extended to mean the moderating every other pleasure, appetite, inclination, or passion, bodily or mental, even to our avarice and ambition. I proposed to myself, for the sake of clearness, to use rather more names, with fewer ideas annexed to each, than a few names with more ideas; and I included under thirteen names of virtues all that at that time occurred to me as necessary or desirable, and annexed to each a short precept, which fully expressed the extent I gave to its meaning.

These names of virtues, with their precepts were:

1. Temperance.

Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.

2. Silence.

Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.

3. Order.

Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

4. Resolution.

Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.

5. Frugality.

Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; *i.e.,* waste nothing.

6. Industry.

Lose no time; be always employed in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.

7. Sincerity.

Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. Justice.

Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. Moderation.

Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. Cleanliness.

Tolerate no uncleanliness in body, clothes, or habitation.

11. Tranquillity.

Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12. Chastity.

13. Humility.

Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

My intention being to acquire the ***habitude*** of all these virtues, I judged it would be well not to distract my attention by attempting the whole at once, but to fix it on one of them at a time; and, when I should be master of that, then to proceed to another, and so on, till I should have gone through the thirteen; and as the previous acquisition of some might facilitate the acquisition of certain others, I arranged them with that view, as they stand above. Temperance first, as it tends to procure that coolness and clearness of head, which is so necessary where constant vigilance was to be kept up, and guard maintained against the unremitting attraction of ancient habits, and the force of perpetual temptations. This being acquired and established, Silence would be more easy; and my desire being to gain knowledge at the same time that I improved in virtue, and considering that in conversation it was obtained rather by the use of the ears than of the tongue, and therefore wishing to break a habit I was getting into of prattling, punning, and joking, which only made me acceptable to trifling company, I gave Silence the second place. This and the next, Order, I expected would allow me more time for attending to my project and my studies. Resolution, once become habitual, would keep me firm in my endeavors to obtain all the subsequent virtues; Frugality and Industry freeing me from my remaining debt, and producing affluence and independence, would make more easy the practice of Sincerity and Justice, etc., etc. Conceiving then, that, agreeably to the advice of Pythagoras in his Golden Verses,[32] daily examination would be necessary, I contrived the following method for conducting that examination.[33]

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[32] Pythagoras was a Greek philosopher of the sixth century B. C. The *Golden Verses* may be of a later date.

[33] Franklin, in common with most mid-eighteenth century Englishmen, took an intellectual and utilitarian attitude toward morality, virtue, and religion.

I made a little book, in which I allotted a page for each of the virtues. I ruled each page with red ink, so as to have seven columns, one for each day of the week, marking each column with a letter for the day. I crossed these columns with thirteen red lines, marking the beginning of each line with the first letter of one of the virtues, on which line, and in its proper column, I might mark, by a little black spot, every fault I found upon examination to have been committed respecting that virtue upon that day.

Form of the Pages.

TEMPERANCE.

EAT NOT TO DULNESS;
DRINK NOT TO ELEVATION.

	S.	M.	T.	W.	T.	F.	S.
T.							
S.	*	*		*		*	
O.	* *	*	*		*	*	*
R.			*			*	
F.		*			*		
I.			*				
S.							
J.							
M.							
C.							
T.							
C.							
H.							

I determined to give a week's strict attention to each of the virtues successively. Thus, in the first week, my great guard was to avoid every the least offense against Temperance, leaving the other virtues to their ordinary chance, only marking every evening the faults of the day. Thus, if in the first week I could keep my first line, marked T, clear of spots, I supposed the habit of that virtue so much strengthened, and its opposite weakened, that I might venture extending my attention to include the next, and for the following week keep both lines clear of spots. Proceeding thus to the last, I could go through a course complete in thirteen weeks, and four courses in a year. And like him who, having a garden to weed, does not attempt to eradicate all the bad herbs at once, which would exceed his reach and his strength, but works on one of the beds at a time, and, having accomplished the first, proceeds to a second, so I should have, I hoped, the encouraging pleasure of seeing on my pages the progress I made in virtue, by clearing successively my lines of their spots, till in the end, by a number of courses, I should be happy in viewing a clean book, after a thirteen weeks' daily examination.

This my little book had for its motto these lines from Addison's *Cato*:[34]

''Here will I hold. If there's a power above us
(And that there is, all nature cries aloud
Thro' all her works), He must delight in virtue;
And that which he delights in must be happy.''

Another from Cicero,

''O vitæ Philosophia dux! O virtutum indagatrix expultrixque vitiorum! Unus dies, bene et ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati est anteponendus.''[35]

Another from the *Proverbs* of Solomon, speaking of wisdom or virtue:

''Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.'' iii.16, 17.

And conceiving God to be the fountain of wisdom, I thought it right and necessary to solicit his assistance for obtaining it; to this end I formed the following little prayer, which was prefixed to my tables of examination, for daily use.

''*O powerful Goodness! bountiful Father! merciful Guide! Increase in me that wisdom which discovers my truest interest. Strengthen my resolutions to perform what that wisdom dictates. Accept my kind offices to thy other children as the only return in my power for thy continual favors to me.*''

I used also sometimes a little prayer which I took from Thomson's[36] poems, viz.:

''Father of light and life, thou Good Supreme!
O teach me what is good; teach me Thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit; and fill my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!''

The precept of Order requiring that *every part of my business should have its allotted time*, one page in my little book contained the following scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day.

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[34] A tragedy founded on the death of the philosopher and patriot, Cato, 46 B. C.

[35] O philosophy, guide of life! O searcher-out of virtue and expeller of vice! One day lived well and by thy precepts is to be preferred to an immortality of sin.

[36] James Thomson, 1700-1748, author of *The Seasons*.

The Morning. *Question.* What good shall I do this day?	5 6 7	Rise, wash, and address *Powerful Goodness!* Contrive day's business, and take the resolution of the day; prosecute the present study, and breakfast.
	8 9 10 11	Work.
Noon.	12 1	Read, or overlook my accounts, and dine.
	2 3 4 5	Work.
Evening. *Question.* What good have I done today?	6 7 8 9	Put things in their places. Supper. Music or diversion, or conversation. Examination of the day.
Night.	10 11 12 1 2 3 4	Sleep.

I entered upon the execution of this plan for self-examination, and continued it with occasional intermissions for some time. I was surprised to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined; but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish. To avoid the trouble of renewing now and then my little book, which, by scraping out the marks on the paper of old faults to make room for new ones in a new course, became full of holes, I transferred my tables and precepts to the ivory leaves of a memorandum book, on which the lines were drawn with red ink, that made a durable stain, and on those lines I marked my faults with a black lead-pencil, which marks I could easily wipe out with a wet sponge. After a while I went through one course only in a year, and afterward only one in several years, till at length I omitted them entirely, being employed in voyages and business abroad, with a multiplicity of affairs that interfered; but I always carried my little book with me.

My scheme of Order gave me the most trouble; and I found that, though it might be practicable where a man's business was such as to leave him the disposition of his time, that of a journeyman printer, for instance, it was not possible to be exactly observed by a master, who must mix with the world, and often receive people of business at their own hours. *Order,* too, with regard to places for things, papers, etc., I found extremely difficult to acquire. I had not been early accustomed to it, and, having an exceeding good memory, I was not so sensible of the inconvenience attending want of method. This article, therefore, cost me so much painful attention, and my faults in it vexed me so much, and I made so little progress in amendment, and had such frequent relapses, that I was almost ready to give up the attempt, and content myself with a faulty character in that respect, like the man who, in buying an axe of a smith, my neighbor, desired to have the whole of its surface as bright as the edge. The smith consented to grind it bright for him if he would turn the wheel; he turned, while the smith pressed the broad face of the axe hard and heavily on the stone, which made the turning of it very fatiguing. The man came every now and then from the wheel to see how the work went on, and at length would take his axe as it was, without farther grinding. "No," said the smith, "turn on, turn on; we shall have it bright by and by; as yet, it is only speckled." "Yes," says the man, *"but I think I like a speckled axe best."* And I believe this may have been the case with many, who, having, for want of some such means as I employed, found the difficulty of obtaining good and breaking bad habits in other points of vice and virtue, have given up the struggle, and concluded that *"a speckled axe was best"*;[37] for something, that pretended to be reason, was every now and then suggesting to me that such extreme nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which, if it were known, would make me ridiculous; that a perfect character might be attended with the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow a few faults in himself, to keep his friends in countenance.

In truth, I found myself incorrigible with respect to Order; and now I am grown old, and my memory bad, I feel very sensibly the want of it. But, on the whole, though I never arrived at the perfection I had been so ambitious of obtaining, but fell far short of it, yet I was, by the endeavor, a better and a happier man than I otherwise should have been if I had not attempted it; as those who aim at perfect writing by imitating the engraved copies, though they never reach the wished-for excellence of those copies, their hand is mended by the endeavor, and is tolerable while it continues fair and legible.

It may be well my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor owed the constant felicity of his life, down to his 79th year, in which this is written. What reverses may attend the remainder is in the hand of Providence; but, if they arrive, the reflection on past happiness enjoyed ought to help his bearing them with more resignation. To Temperance he ascribes his long-continued health, and what is still left to him of a good constitution; to Industry and Frugality, the early easiness of his circumstances and acquisition of his fortune, with all that knowledge that enabled him to be a useful citizen, and obtained for him some degree of reputation among the learned; to Sincerity and Justice, the confidence of his country, and the honorable employs it conferred upon him; and to the joint influence of the whole mass of the virtues, even in the imperfect state he was able to acquire them, all that evenness of temper, and that cheerfulness in conversation, which makes his company still sought for, and agreeable even to his younger acquaintance. I hope, therefore, that some of my descendants may follow the example and reap the benefit.[38]

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[37] Franklin had a faculty of acquiring and coining sayings like those of Lincoln in their homespun humor and shrewd knowledge of life.

It will be remarked that, though my scheme was not wholly without religion, there was in it no mark of any of the distinguishing tenets of any particular sect. I had purposely avoided them; for, being fully persuaded of the utility and excellency of my method, and that it might be serviceable to people in all religions, and intending some time or other to publish it, I would not have anything in it that should prejudice any one, of any sect, against it. I purposed writing a little comment on each virtue, in which I would have shown the advantages of possessing it, and the mischiefs attending its opposite vice; and I should have called my book THE ART OF VIRTUE, because it would have shown the means and manner of obtaining virtue, which would have distinguished it from the mere exhortation to be good, that does not instruct and indicate the means, but is like the apostle's man of verbal charity, who only without showing to the naked and hungry how or where they might get clothes or victuals, exhorted them to be fed and clothed.—*James* ii. 15, 16.

But it so happened that my intention of writing and publishing this comment was never fulfilled. I did, indeed, from time to time, put down short hints of the sentiments, reasonings, etc., to be made use of in it, some of which I have still by me; but the necessary close attention to private business in the earlier part of my life, and public business since, have occasioned my postponing it; for, it being connected in my mind with *a great and extensive project*,[39] that required the whole man to execute, and which an unforeseen succession of employs prevented my attending to, it has hitherto remained unfinished.

In this piece it was my design to explain and enforce this doctrine, that vicious actions are not hurtful because they are forbidden, but forbidden because they are hurtful, the nature of man alone considered; that it was, therefore, every one's interest to be virtuous who wished to be happy even in this world; and I should, from this circumstance (there being always in the world a number of rich merchants, nobility, states, and princes, who have need of honest instruments for the management of their affairs, and such being so rare), have endeavored to convince young persons that no qualities were so likely to make a poor man's fortune as those of probity and integrity.[40]

My list of virtues contained at first but twelve; but a Quaker friend having kindly informed me that I was generally thought proud; that my pride showed itself frequently in conversation; that I was not content with being in the right when discussing any point, but was overbearing and rather insolent, of which he convinced me by mentioning several instances; I determined endeavoring to cure myself, if I could, of this vice or folly among the rest, and I added Humility to my list, giving an extensive meaning to the word.

I cannot boast of much success in acquiring the *reality* of this virtue, but I had a good deal with regard to the *appearance* of it. I made it a rule to forbear all direct contradiction to the sentiments of others, and all positive assertion of my own. I even forbid myself, agreeably to the old laws of our Junto,[41] the use of every word or expression in the language that imported a fixed opinion, such as *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, etc., and I adopted, instead of them, *I conceive, I apprehend,* or *I imagine* a thing to be so or so; or it *so appears to me at pres-*

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[38] The manly, sincere modesty of such passages as these gives us confidence in all of Franklin's estimates of himself and his fellow men.

[39] Franklin, like Bolingbroke and other English deists of the time, had in mind the founding of a new religious sect whose creed was to be much the same as that of the deists.

[40] In this coldly practical view of morality, Franklin is expressing the views of his generation of Englishmen, who looked favorably on religion chiefly as a cheap and convenient police force in society.

[41] A debating club that Franklin had organized when a young man.

ent. When another asserted something that I thought an error, I denied myself the pleasure of contradicting him abruptly, and of showing immediately some absurdity in his proposition; and in answering I began by observing that in certain cases or circumstances his opinion would be right, but in the present case there *appeared* or *seemed* to me some difference, etc. I soon found the advantage of this change in my manner; the conversations I engaged in went on more pleasantly. The modest way in which I proposed my opinions procured them a readier reception and less contradiction; I had less mortification when I was found to be in the wrong, and I more easily prevailed with others to give up their mistakes and join with me when I happened to be in the right.

And this mode, which I at first put on with some violence to natural inclination, became at length so easy, and so habitual to me, that perhaps for these fifty years past no one has ever heard a dogmatical expression escape me. And to this habit (after my character of integrity) I think it principally owing that I had early so much weight with my fellow-citizens when I proposed new institutions, or alterations in the old, and so much influence in public councils when I became a member; for I was but a bad speaker, never eloquent, subject to much hesitation in my choice of words, hardly correct in language, and yet I generally carried my points.[42]

In reality, there is, perhaps, no one of our natural passions so hard to subdue as *pride*. Disguise it, struggle with it, beat it down, stifle it, mortify it as much as one pleases, it is still alive, and will every now and then peep out and show itself; you will see it, perhaps, often in this history; for, even if I could conceive that I had completely overcome it, I should probably be proud of my humility.

. . . .

In 1732 I first published my *Almanac*, under the name of *Richard Saunders;* it was continued by me about twenty-five years, commonly called *Poor Richard's Almanac.* I endeavored to make it both entertaining and useful; and it accordingly came to be in such demand, that I reaped considerable profit from it, vending annually near ten thousand. And observing that it was generally read, scarce any neighborhood in the province being without it, I considered it as a proper vehicle for conveying instruction among the common people, who bought scarcely any other books; I therefore filled all the little spaces that occurred between the remarkable days in the calendar with proverbial sentences, chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality as the means of procuring wealth, and thereby securing virtue; it being more difficult for a man in want to act always honestly, as, to use here one of those proverbs, *it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.*

These proverbs, which contained the wisdom of many ages and nations, I assembled and formed into a connected discourse prefixed to the *Almanac* of 1757, as the harangue of a wise old man to the people attending an auction. The bringing all these scattered counsels thus into a focus enabled them to make greater impression. The piece, being universally approved, was copied in all the newspapers of the continent; reprinted in Britain on a broad side, to be stuck up in houses; two translations were made of it in French, and great numbers bought by the clergy and gentry, to distribute gratis among their poor parishioners and tenants. In Pennsylvania, as it discouraged useless expense in foreign superfluities, some thought it had its share of influence in producing that growing plenty of money which was observable for several years after its publication.

. . . .

In 1739 arrived among us from Ireland the Reverend Mr. Whitefield,[43] who had made himself remarkable there as an itinerant preacher. He was at first permitted to preach in some of our churches; but the clergy, taking a dislike to him, soon refused him their pulpits, and he was obliged to preach in the fields. The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous, and it was matter of speculation to me, who was one of the number, to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admired and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them, by assuring them they were naturally *half beasts and half devils.* It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seemed as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk through the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street.

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[42] See what Jefferson says of Franklin's speeches, p. 169.

[43] George Whitefield, 1714-70, the celebrated English evangelist and pulpit orator of the Methodist movement in the English church. In the emotional, enthusiastic nature of his religious temperament he was the opposite of Franklin. This was the first of his three tours to America.

And it being found inconvenient to assemble in the open air, subject to its inclemencies, the building of a house to meet in was no sooner proposed, and persons appointed to receive contributions, but sufficient sums were soon received to procure the ground and erect the building, which was one hundred feet long and seventy broad, about the size of Westminster Hall;[44] and the work was carried on with such spirit as to be finished in a much shorter time than could have been expected. Both house and ground were vested in trustees, expressly for the use of any preacher of any religious persuasion who might desire to say something to the people at Philadelphia; the design in building not being to accommodate any particular sect, but the inhabitants in general; so that even if the Mufti[45] of Constantinople were to send a missionary to preach Mohammedanism to us, he would find a pulpit at his service.

Mr. Whitefield, in leaving us, went preaching all the way through the colonies to Georgia. The settlement of that province had lately been begun, but, instead of being made with hardy, industrious husbandmen accustomed to labor, the only people fit for such an enterprise, it was with families of broken shop-keepers and other insolvent debtors, many of indolent and idle habits, taken out of the jails,[46] who, being set down in the woods, unqualified for clearing land, and unable to endure the hardships of a new settlement, perished in numbers, leaving many helpless children unprovided for. The sight of their miserable situation inspired the benevolent heart of Mr. Whitefield with the idea of building an Orphan House there, in which they might be supported and educated. Returning northward, he preached up this charity, and made large collections, for his eloquence had a wonderful power over the hearts and purses of his hearers, of which I myself was an instance.

I did not disapprove of the design, but, as Georgia was then destitute of materials and workmen, and it was proposed to send them from Philadelphia at a great expense, I thought it would have been better to have built the house here, and brought the children to it. This I advised; but he was resolute in his first project, rejected my counsel, and I therefore refused to contribute. I happened soon after to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles[47] in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the coppers. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably, that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all. At this sermon there was also one of our club, who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, had, by precaution, emptied his pockets before he came from home. Towards the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong desire to give, and applied to a neighbor, who stood near him, to borrow some money for the purpose. The application was unfortunately [made] to perhaps the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was, *"At any other time, Friend Hopkinson, I would lend to thee freely; but not now, for thee seems to be out of thy right senses."*

Some of Mr. Whitefield's enemies affected to suppose that he would apply these collections to his own private emolument; but I, who was intimately acquainted with him (being employed in printing his Sermons and Journals, etc.), never had the least suspicion of his integrity, but am to this day decidedly of opinion that he was in all his conduct a perfectly *honest man;* and methinks my testimony in his favor ought to have the more weight, as we had no religious connection. He used, indeed, sometimes to pray for my conversion, but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard. Ours was a mere civil friendship, sincere on both sides, and lasted to his death.

The following instance will show something of the terms on which we stood. Upon one of his arrivals from England at Boston he wrote to me that he should come soon to Philadelphia, but knew not where he could lodge when there, as he understood his old friend and host, Mr. Benezet, was removed to Germantown. My answer was, "You know my house; if you can make shift with its scanty accommodations, you will be most heartily welcome." He replied, that if I made that kind offer for Christ's sake, I should not miss of a reward. And I returned, *"Don't let me be mistaken; it was not for Christ's sake, but for your sake."* One of our common acquaintance jocosely remarked, that, knowing it to be the custom of the saints, when they received any favor, to shift the burden of the obligation from off their own shoulders, and place it in heaven, I had contrived to fix it on earth.

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[44] A hall famous in English history, adjoining the Houses of Parliament in Westminster. It is 68 by 290 feet in area.

[45] A high Mohammedan civil official.

[46] This passage is not wholly unbiased. Oglethorpe's motives in founding Georgia were philanthropic and his colony may have contained a good many unworthy persons; but the colonists were for the main part chosen with especial care for their usefulness in colonial development.

[47] A Spanish gold coin worth about four dollars.

The last time I saw Mr. Whitefield was in London, when he consulted me about his Orphan House concern, and his purpose of appropriating it to the establishment of a college.

He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words and sentences so perfectly, that he might be heard and understood at a great distance, especially as his auditories, however numerous, observed the most exact silence. He preached one evening from the top of the Court-house steps, which are in the middle of Market Street, and on the west side of Second Street, which crosses it at right angles Both streets were filled with his hearers to a considerable distance. Being among the hindmost in Market Street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards down the street towards the river; and I found his voice distinct till I came near Front Street, when some noise in that street obscured it. Imagining then a semicircle of which my distance should be the radius, and that it were filled with auditors, to each of whom I allowed two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconciled me to the newspaper accounts of his having preached to twenty-five thousand people in the fields, and to the ancient histories of generals haranguing whole armies, of which I had sometimes doubted.

By hearing him often, I came to distinguish easily between sermons newly composed, and those which he had often preached in the course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improved by frequent repetitions that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of voice was so perfectly well turned and well placed that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse; a pleasure of much the same kind with that received from an excellent piece of music. This is an advantage itinerant preachers have over those who are stationary, as the latter cannot well improve their delivery of a sermon by so many rehearsals.

His writing and printing from time to time gave great advantage to his enemies; unguarded expressions, and even erroneous opinions, delivered in preaching, might have been afterwards explained or qualified by supposing others that might have accompanied them, or they might have been denied; but *litera scripta manet.*[48] Critics attacked his writings violently, and with so much appearance of reason as to diminish the number of his votaries and prevent their increase; so that I am of opinion if he had never written anything, he would have left behind him a much more numerous and important sect, and his reputation might in that case have been still growing, even after his death, as there being nothing of his writing on which to found a censure and give him a lower character, his proselytes would be left at liberty to feign for him as great a variety of excellencies as their enthusiastic admiration might wish him to have possessed.

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In order of time, I should have mentioned before, that having, in 1742, invented an open stove for the better warming of rooms, and at the same time saving fuel, as the fresh air admitted was warmed in entering, I made a present of the model to Mr. Robert Grace, one of my early friends, who, having an iron-furnace, found the casting of the plates for these stoves a profitable thing, as they were growing in demand. To promote that demand, I wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled *"An Account of the new-invented Pennsylvania Fireplaces; wherein their Construction and Manner of Operation is particularly explained; their Advantages above every other Method of warming Rooms demonstrated; and all Objections that have been raised against the Use of them answered and obviated,"* etc. This pamphlet had a good effect. Governor Thomas was so pleased with the construction of this stove, as described in it, that he offered to give me a patent for the sole vending of them for a term of years; but I declined it from a principle which has ever weighed with me on such occasions, viz., *That, as we enjoy great advantages from the inventions of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by any in-*

[48] The written word endures.

vention of ours; and this we should do freely and generously.

An ironmonger in London, however, assuming a good deal of my pamphlet, and working it up into his own, and making some small changes in the machine, which rather hurt its operation, got a patent for it there, and made, as I was told, a little fortune by it. And this is not the only instance of patents taken out for my inventions by others, though not always with the same success, which I never contested, as having no desire of profiting by patents myself, and hating disputes. The use of these fireplaces in very many houses, both of this and the neighboring colonies, has been, and is, a great saving of wood to the inhabitants.

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The British government, not choosing to permit the union of the colonies as proposed at Albany,[49] and to trust that union with their defense, lest they should thereby grow too military and feel their own strength, suspicions and jealousies at this time being entertained of them, sent over General Braddock with two regiments of regular English troops for that purpose. He landed at Alexandria, in Virginia, and thence marched to Frederictown, in Maryland, where he halted for carriages. Our Assembly apprehending, from some information, that he had conceived violent prejudices against them, as averse to the service, wished me to wait upon him, not as from them, but as postmaster-general, under the guise of proposing to settle with him the mode of conducting with most celerity and certainty the despatches between him and the governors of the several provinces, with whom he must necessarily have continual correspondence, and of which they proposed to pay the expense. My son accompanied me on this journey.

We found the general at Frederictown, waiting impatiently for the return of those he had sent through the back parts of Maryland and Virginia to collect wagons. I stayed with him several days, dined with him daily, and had full opportunity of removing all his prejudices, by the information of what the Assembly had before his arrival actually done, and were still willing to do, to facilitate his operations. When I was about to depart, the returns of wagons to be obtained were brought in, by which it appeared that they amounted only to twenty-five, and not all of those were in serviceable condition. The general and all the officers were surprised, declared the expedition was then at an end, being impossible, and exclaimed against the ministers for ignorantly landing them in a country destitute of the means of conveying their stores, baggage, etc., not less than one hundred and fifty wagons being necessary.

I happened to say I thought it was pity they had not been landed rather in Pennsylvania, as in that country almost every farmer had his wagon. The general eagerly laid hold of my words, and said, "Then you, sir, who are a man of interest there, can probably procure them for us; and I beg you will undertake it." I asked what terms were to be offered the owners of the wagons; and I was desired to put on paper the terms that appeared to me necessary. This I did, and they were agreed to, and a commission and instructions accordingly prepared immediately.

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This general was, I think, a brave man, and might probably have made a figure as a good officer in some European war. But he had too much self-confidence, too high an opinion of the validity of regular troops, and too mean a one of both Americans and Indians. George Croghan, our Indian interpreter, joined him on his march with one hundred of those people, who might have been of great use to his army as guides, scouts, etc., if he had treated them kindly; but he slighted and neglected them, and they gradually left him.

In conversation with him one day, he was giving me some account of his intended progress. "After taking Fort Duquesne," says he, "I am to proceed to Niagara; and, having taken that, to Frontenac, if the season will allow time; and I suppose it will, for Duquesne can hardly detain me above three or four days; and then I see nothing that can obstruct my march to Niagara." Having before revolved in my mind the long line his army must make in their march by a very narrow road, to be cut for them through the woods and bushes, and also what I had read of a former defeat of fifteen hundred French, who invaded the Iroquois country, I had conceived some doubts and some fears for the event of the campaign.

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[49] At a congress of commissioners from the different colonies, convened in Albany in 1754 to consider ways of defending the colonies against the French and Indians, Franklin had proposed a plan for uniting the colonies in a Federal union. The historian Fiske speaks of the plan as one showing great foresight and wisdom.

But I ventured only to say, "To be sure, sir, if you arrive well before Duquesne, with these fine troops, so well provided with artillery, that place not yet completely fortified, and as we hear with no very strong garrison, can probably make but a short resistance. The only danger I apprehend of obstruction to your march is from ambuscades of Indians, who, by constant practice, are dexterous in laying and executing them; and the slender line, near four miles long, which your army must make, may expose it to be attacked by surprise in its flanks, and to be cut like a thread into several pieces, which, from their distance, cannot come up in time to support each other."

He smiled at my ignorance, and replied, "These savages may, indeed, be a formidable enemy to your raw American militia, but upon the king's regular and disciplined troops, sir, it is impossible they should make any impression." I was conscious of an impropriety in my disputing with a military man in matters of his profession, and said no more. The enemy, however, did not take the advantage of his army which I apprehended its long line of march exposed it to, but let it advance without interruption till within nine miles of the place; and then, when more in a body (for it had just passed a river, where the front had halted till all were come over), and in a more open part of the woods than any it had passed, attacked its advanced guard by a heavy fire from behind trees and bushes, which was the first intelligence the general had of an enemy's being near him. This guard being disordered, the general hurried the troops up to their assistance, which was done in great confusion, through wagons, baggage, and cattle; and presently the fire came upon their flank: the officers, being on horseback, were more easily distinguished, picked out as marks, and fell very fast; and the soldiers were crowded together in a huddle, having or hearing no orders, and standing to be shot at till two thirds of them were killed; and then, being seized with a panic, the whole fled with precipitation.

The wagoners took each a horse out of his team and scampered; their example was immediately followed by others; so that all the wagons, provisions, artillery, and stores were left to the enemy. The general, being wounded, was brought off with difficulty; his secretary, Mr. Shirley, was killed by his side; and out of eighty-six officers, sixty-three were killed or wounded, and seven hundred and fourteen men killed out of eleven hundred. These eleven hundred had been picked men from the whole army; the rest had been left behind with Colonel Dunbar, who was to follow with the heavier part of the stores, provisions, and baggage. The flyers, not being pursued, arrived at Dunbar's camp, and the panic they brought with them instantly seized him and all his people; and, though he had now above one thousand men, and the enemy who had beaten Braddock did not at most exceed four hundred Indians and French together, instead of proceeding, and endeavoring to recover some of the lost honor, he ordered all the stores, ammunition, etc., to be destroyed, that he might have more horses to assist his flight towards the settlements, and less lumber to remove. He was there met with requests from the governors of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, that he would post his troops on the frontier, so as to afford some protection to the inhabitants; but he continued his hasty march through all the country, not thinking himself safe till he arrived at Philadelphia, where the inhabitants could protect him. This whole transaction gave us Americans the first suspicion that our exalted ideas of the prowess of British regulars had not been well founded.

In their first march, too, from their landing till they got beyond the settlements, they had plundered and stripped the inhabitants, totally ruining some poor families, besides insulting, abusing, and confining the people if they remonstrated. This was enough to put us out of conceit of such defenders, if we had really wanted any. How different was the conduct of our French friends in 1781, who, during a march through the most inhabited part of our country from Rhode Island to Virginia, near seven hundred miles, occasioned not the smallest complaint for the loss of a pig, a chicken, or even an apple.

Captain Orme, who was one of the general's aides-de-camp, and, being grievously wounded, was brought off with him, and continued with him to his death, which happened in a few days, told me that he was totally silent all the first day, and at night only said, *"Who would have thought it?"* That he was silent again the following day, saying only at last, *"We shall better know how to deal with them another time"*; and died in a few minutes after.

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The next day being fair, we continued our march and arrived at the desolated

Gnadenhut.[50] There was a saw-mill near, round which were left several piles of boards, with which we soon hutted ourselves; an operation the more necessary at that inclement season as we had no tents. Our first work was to bury more effectually the dead we found there, who had been half interred by the country people.

The next morning our fort was planned and marked out, the circumference measuring four hundred and fifty-five feet, which would require as many palisades to be made of trees, one with another, of a foot diameter each. Our axes, of which we had seventy, were immediately set to work to cut down trees, and, our men being dexterous in the use of them, great dispatch was made. Seeing the trees fall so fast, I had the curiosity to look at my watch when two men began to cut at a pine; in six minutes they had it upon the ground, and I found it of fourteen inches diameter. Each pine made three palisades of eighteen feet long, pointed at one end. While these were preparing, our other men dug a trench all round, of three feet deep, in which the palisades were to be planted; and our wagons, the bodies being taken off, and the fore and hind wheels separated by taking out the pin which united the two parts of the perch, we had ten carriages, with two horses each, to bring the palisades from the woods to the spot. When they were set up, our carpenters built a stage of boards all round within, about six feet high, for the men to stand on when to fire through the loopholes. We had one swivel gun, which we mounted on one of the angles, and fired it as soon as fixed, to let the Indians know, if any were within hearing, that we had such pieces; and thus our fort, if such a magnificent name may be given to so miserable a stockade, was finished in a week, though it rained so hard every other day that the men could not work.

This gave me occasion to observe, that, when men are employed they are best contented; for on the days they worked they were good-natured and cheerful, and, with the consciousness of having done a good day's work, they spent the evening jollily; but on our idle days they were mutinous and quarrelsome, finding fault with their pork, the bread, etc., and in continual ill-humor, which put me in mind of a sea-captain, whose rule it was to keep his men constantly at work; and when his mate once told him that they had done everything, and there was nothing further to employ them about, *"Oh," says he, "make them scour the anchor."*

This kind of fort, however contemptible, is a sufficient defense against Indians, who have no cannon. Finding ourselves now posted securely, and having a place to retreat to on occasion, we ventured out in parties to scour the adjacent country. We met with no Indians, but we found the places on the neighboring hills where they had lain to watch our proceedings. There was an art in their contrivance of those places that seems worth mention. It being winter, a fire was necessary for them; but a common fire on the surface of the ground would by its light have discovered their position at a distance. They had therefore dug holes in the ground about three feet diameter and somewhat deeper; we saw where they had with their hatchets cut off the charcoal from the sides of burnt logs lying in the woods. With these coals they had made small fires in the bottom of the holes, and we observed among the weeds and grass the prints of their bodies, made by their laying all round, with their legs hanging down in the holes to keep their feet warm, which with them is an essential point. This kind of fire, so managed, could not discover them, either by its light, flame, sparks, or even smoke: it appeared that their number was not great, and it seems they saw we were too many to be attacked by them with prospect of advantage.

We had for our chaplain a zealous Presbyterian minister, Mr. Beatty, who complained to me that the men did not generally attend his prayers and exhortations. When they enlisted, they were promised, besides pay and provisions, a gill of rum a day, which was punctually served out to them, half in the morning and the other half in the evening; and I observed they were as punctual in attending to receive it; upon which I said to Mr. Beatty, "It is, perhaps, below the dignity of your profession to act as steward of the rum, but if you were to deal it out and only just after prayers, you would have them all about you." He liked the thought, undertook the office, and, with the help of a few hands to measure out the liquor, executed it to satisfaction, and never were prayers more generally and more punctually attended; so that I thought this method preferable to the punishment inflicted by some military laws for non-attendance on divine service.

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[50] After Braddock's defeat, the governor of Pennsylvania, knowing Franklin to be a man who would carry through what he undertook, gave into his hands the defense of the whole northwestern frontier of the colony, furnishing him with signed blank commissions for this purpose. Franklin raised a force, with one detachment of which he advanced to erect a fort at Gnadenhut, a Moravian village in the wilderness which had been burnt by the Indians.

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Before I proceed in relating the part I had in public affairs under this new governor's[51] administration, it may not be amiss here to give some account of the rise and progress of my philosophical reputation.

In 1746, being at Boston, I met there with a Dr. Spence, who was lately arrived from Scotland, and showed me some electric experiments. They were imperfectly performed, as he was not very expert; but, being on a subject quite new to me, they equally surprised and pleased me. Soon after my return to Philadelphia, our library company received from Mr. P. Collinson, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, a present of a glass tube,[52] with some account of the use of it in making such experiments. I eagerly seized the opportunity of repeating what I had seen at Boston; and, by much practice, acquired great readiness in performing those, also, which we had an account of from England, adding a number of new ones. I say much practice, for my house was continually full, for some time, with people who came to see these new wonders.

To divide a little this incumbrance among my friends, I caused a number of similar tubes to be blown at our glass-house, with which they furnished themselves, so that we had at length several performers. Among these, the principal was Mr. Kinnersley, an ingenious neighbor, who, being out of business, I encouraged to undertake showing the experiments for money, and drew up for him two lectures, in which the experiments were ranged in such order, and accompanied with such explanations in such method, as that the foregoing should assist in comprehending the following. He procured an elegant apparatus for the purpose, in which all the little machines that I had roughly made for myself were nicely formed by instrument-makers. His lectures were well attended, and gave great satisfaction; and after some time he went through the colonies, exhibiting them in every capital town, and picked up some money. In the West India islands, indeed, it was with difficulty the experiments could be made, from the general moisture of the air.

Obliged as we were to Mr. Collinson for his present of the tube, etc., I thought it right he should be informed of our success in using it, and wrote him several letters containing accounts of our experiments. He got them read in the Royal Society, where they were not at first thought worth so much notice as to be printed in their Transactions. One paper, which I wrote for Mr. Kinnersley, on the sameness of lightning with electricity, I sent to Dr. Mitchel, an acquaintance of mine, and one of the members also of that society, who wrote me word that it had been read but was laughed at by the connoisseurs. The papers, however, being shown to Dr. Fothergill,[53] he thought them of too much value to be stifled, and advised the printing of them. Mr. Collinson then gave them to Cave[54] for publication in his *Gentleman's Magazine;* but he chose to print them separately in a pamphlet, and Dr. Fothergill wrote the preface. Cave, it seems, judged rightly for his profit, for by the additions that arrived afterward, they swelled to a quarto volume, which has had five editions, and cost him nothing for copy-money.

It was, however, some time before those papers were much taken notice of in England. A copy of them happening to fall into the hands of the Count de Buffon,[55] a philosopher deservedly of great reputation in France, and, indeed, all over Europe, he prevailed with M. Dalibard to translate them into French, and they were printed at Paris. The publication offended the Abbé Nollet, preceptor in Natural Philosophy to the royal family, and an able experimenter, who had formed and published a theory of electricity,[56] which then had the general vogue. He could not at first believe that such a work came from America, and said it must have been fabricated by his enemies at Paris, to decry his system. Afterwards, having been assured that there really existed such a person as Franklin at Philadelphia, which he had doubted, he wrote and published a volume of Letters, chiefly addressed to me, defending his theory, and denying the verity of my experiments, and of the positions deduced from them.

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[51] Captain Denny.

[52] Franklin had been influential in founding the Philadelphia Public Library some twenty-five years before. The Royal Society, founded in 1660, was the oldest scientific association in England. The glass tubes used in these primitive but important electrical experiments for producing frictional electricity were some two feet and a half long and three inches in diameter.

[53] John Fothergill, M.D., F.R.S., ever afterwards a warm friend, especially during Franklin's residence in London as agent of the colonies.

[54] Edward Cave founded the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1731. This monthly was devoted to politics, literature, science and art, and was the most influential publication of the day in Great Britain.

[55] A celebrated French scientist, 1707-1788.

[56] The afflux-and-efflux theory.

I once purposed answering the Abbé, and actually began the answer; but, on consideration that my writings contained a description of experiments which any one might repeat and verify, and if not to be verified, could not be defended; or of observations offered as conjectures, and not delivered dogmatically, therefore not laying me under any obligation to defend them; and reflecting that a dispute between two persons, writing in different languages, might be lengthened greatly by mistranslations, and thence misconceptions of one another's meaning, much of one of the Abbé's letters being founded on an error in the translation, I concluded to let my papers shift for themselves, believing it was better to spend what time I could spare from public business in making new experiments, than in disputing about those already made. I therefore never answered M. Nollet, and the event gave me no cause to repent my silence; for my friend M. le Roy, of the Royal Academy of Sciences, took up my cause and refuted him; my book was translated into the Italian, German, and Latin languages; and the doctrine it contained was by degrees universally adopted by the philosophers of Europe, in preference to that of the Abbé; so that he lived to see himself the last of his sect, except Monsieur B——, of Paris, his *élève*[57] and immediate disciple.

What gave my book the more sudden and general celebrity, was the success of one of its proposed experiments, made by Messrs. Dalibard and De Lor at Marly, for drawing lightning from the clouds. This engaged the public attention everywhere. M. de Lor, who had an apparatus for experimental philosophy, and lectured in that branch of science, undertook to repeat what he called the *Philadelphia Experiments;* and, after they were performed before the king and court, all the curious of Paris flocked to see them. I will not swell this narrative with an account of that capital experiment, nor of the infinite pleasure I received in the success of a similar one I made soon after with a kite at Philadelphia, as both are to be found in the histories of electricity.

Dr. Wright, an English physician, when at Paris, wrote to a friend, who was of the Royal Society, an account of the high esteem my experiments were in among the learned abroad, and of their wonder that my writings had been so little noticed in England. The society, on this, resumed the consideration of the letters that had been read to them; and the celebrated Dr. Watson[58] drew up a summary account of them, and of all I had afterwards sent to England on the subject, which he accompanied with some praise of the writer. This summary was then printed in their Transactions; and some members of the society in London, particularly the very ingenious Mr. Canton, having verified the experiment of procuring lightning from the clouds by a pointed rod, and acquainting them with the success, they soon made me more than amends for the slight with which they had before treated me. Without my having made any application for that honor, they chose me a member, and voted that I should be excused the customary payments, which would have amounted to twenty-five guineas; and ever since have given me their Transactions gratis. They also presented me with the gold medal of Sir Godfrey Copley for the year 1753, the delivery of which was accompanied by a very handsome speech of the president, Lord Macclesfield, wherein I was highly honored.[59]

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1771-1789 1791, 1817, 1868

THE WAY TO WEALTH

PREFACE TO POOR RICHARD IMPROVED[1]: 1758

Courteous Reader: I have heard that nothing gives an author so great pleasure as to find his works respectfully quoted by other learned authors. This pleasure I have seldom enjoyed, for, though I have been, if I may say it without vanity, an eminent author (of almanacs) annually now a full quarter of a century, my brother authors in the same way, for what reason I know not, have ever been very sparing in their applauses and no other author has taken the least notice of me; so that, did not my writings produce me some solid pudding, the great deficiency of praise would have quite discouraged me.

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[57] pupil

[58] Sir William Watson, 1715-1787, F. R. S., physician and scientist.

[59] The *Autobiography* from this point includes a brief account of Franklin's further services to Pennsylvania at home, and the beginning of his career as agent for the colony in London, closing with the year 1757.

[1] *Poor Richard's Almanac,* first issued for the year 1733 by Franklin under the pseudonym of Richard Saunders, continued to appear regularly until 1758. The witty and philosophic maxims which were inserted to fill spaces at the top or bottom of the pages, though by no means all original with Franklin (see p. 120), were so well chosen to fit the tastes of the average reader of the time that the almanac came to have the unprecedented sale of ten thousand annually. The death of a rival almanac-maker in 1748 gave Franklin the idea of imitating "his well-known Method, of giving two pages to each Month" and so of changing the title to *Poor Richard Improved.* In the preface to the last number, that of 1758, Franklin gathered together the best of the bright sayings of the earlier twenty-five issues. This preface has been reprinted, (so Paul Leicester Ford reckons) at least four hundred times, under such various headings as "Father Abraham's Speech" and "The Way to Wealth," and has been translated into thirteen languages including the Chinese.

I concluded at length that the people were the best judges of my merit, for they buy my works; and, besides, in my rambles where I am not personally known, I have frequently heard one or other of my adages repeated with "As Poor Richard says" at the end on 't; this gave me some satisfaction, as it showed not only that my instructions were regarded, but discovered likewise some respect for my authority; and I own that, to encourage the practice of remembering and repeating those wise sentences, I have sometimes *quoted myself* with great gravity.

Judge then how much I must have been gratified by an incident I am going to relate to you. I stopped my horse lately where a great number of people were collected at a vendue[2] of merchant goods. The hour of sale not being come, they were conversing on the badness of the times, and one of the company called to a plain, clean old man with white locks, "Pray, Father Abraham, what think you of the times? Won't these heavy taxes quite ruin the country? How shall we be ever able to pay them? What would you advise us to?" Father Abraham stood up and replied, "If you'd have my advice, I'll give it you in short; for A word to the wise is enough, and Many words won't fill a bushel, as Poor Richard says." They joined in desiring him to speak his mind, and gathering round him, he proceeded as follows:

"Friends," says he, "and neighbors, the taxes are indeed very heavy, and if those laid on by the government were the only ones we had to pay, we might more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our idleness, three times as much by our pride, and four times as much by our folly; and from these taxes the commissioners cannot ease or deliver us by allowing an abatement. However, let us hearken to good advice, and something may be done for us; God helps them that help themselves, as Poor Richard says in his almanac of 1733.

"It would be thought a hard government that should tax its people one tenth part of their time, to be employed in its service; but idleness taxes many of us much more if we reckon all that is spent in absolute sloth, or doing of nothing, with that which is spent in idle employments or amusements, that amount to nothing. Sloth, by bringing on diseases, absolutely shortens life. Sloth, like rust, consumes faster than labor wears, while the used key is always bright, as Poor Richard says. But dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that's the stuff life is made of, as Poor Richard says. How much more than is necessary do we spend in sleep, forgetting that The sleeping fox catches no poultry, and that There will be sleeping enough in the grave, as poor Richard says. If time be of all things the most precious, wasting time must be, as Poor Richard says, the greatest prodigality; since, as he elsewhere tells us, Lost time is never found again, and what we call time enough always proves little enough. Let us, then, up and be doing, and doing to the purpose; so by diligence shall we do more with less perplexity. Sloth makes all things difficult, but industry, all things easy, as Poor Richard says; and, He that riseth late must trot all day and shall scarce overtake his business at night; while Laziness travels so slowly that Poverty soon overtakes him, as we read in Poor Richard, who adds, Drive thy business, let not that drive thee; and, Early to bed, and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.

"So what signifies wishing and hoping for better times? We may make these times better if we bestir ourselves. Industry need not wish, as Poor Richard says, and he that lives upon hope will die fasting. There are no gains without pains; then help, hands, for I have no lands; or, if I have, they are smartly taxed. And as Poor Richard likewise observes, He that hath a trade hath an estate; and he that hath a calling, hath an office of profit and honor; but then the trade must be worked at and the calling well followed, or neither the estate nor the office will enable us to pay our taxes. If we are industrious, we shall never starve; for, as Poor Richard says, At the workingman's house hunger looks in, but dares not enter. Nor will the bailiff or the constable enter;

[2] auction

for Industry pays debts, while despair increaseth them, says Poor Richard.—What though you have found no treasure, nor has any rich relation left you a legacy; Diligence is the mother of good luck, as Poor Richard says, and God gives all things to Industry. Then plow deep while sluggards sleep, and you shall have corn to sell and to keep, says Poor Dick. Work while it is called today, for you know not how much you may be hindered tomorrow, which makes Poor Richard say, One today is worth two tomorrows; and farther, Have you somewhat to do tomorrow, do it today. If you were a servant, would you not be ashamed that a good master should catch you idle? Are you, then, your own master? Be ashamed to catch yourself idle, as Poor Dick says. When there is so much to be done for yourself, your family, your country, and your gracious King, be up by peep of day. Let not the sun look down and say, Inglorious here he lies. Handle your tools without mittens; remember that The cat in gloves catches no mice, as Poor Richard says. 'Tis true there is much to be done, and perhaps you are weak-handed; but stick to it steadily, and you will see great effects; for, Constant dropping wears away stones; and, By diligence and patience the mouse ate in two the cable; and, Little strokes fell great oaks, as Poor Richard says in his almanac, the year I cannot just now remember.

"Methinks I hear some of you say, Must a man afford himself no leisure? I will tell thee, my friend, what Poor Richard says: Employ thy time well, if thou meanest to gain leisure; and since thou art not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour. Leisure is time for doing something useful; this leisure the diligent man will obtain, but the lazy man never; so that, as Poor Richard says, A life of leisure and a life of laziness are two things. Do you imagine that sloth will afford you more comfort than labor? No, for as Poor Richard says, Trouble springs from idleness, and grievous toil from needless ease. Many, without labor, would live by their wits only, but they break for want of stock. Whereas industry gives comfort and plenty and respect. Fly pleasures and they'll follow you. The diligent spinner has a large shift; and now I have a sheep and a cow, everybody bids me good morrow. All which is well said by Poor Richard.

"But with our industry we must likewise be steady, settled, and careful, and oversee our own affairs with our own eyes, and not trust too much to others; for, as Poor Richard says:

> I never saw an oft-removed tree,
> Nor yet an oft-removed family,
> That throve so well as those that
> settled be.

And again, Three removes is as bad as a fire; and again, Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee; and again, If you would have your business done, go; if not, send. And again,

> He that by the plow would thrive,
> Himself must either hold or drive.

And again, The eye of a master will do more work than both his hands; and again, Want of care does us more damage than want of knowledge; and again, Not to oversee workmen is to leave them your purse open. Trusting too much to others' care is the ruin of many; for, as the *Almanac* says, In the affairs of this world men are saved, not by faith, but by the want of it. But a man's own care is profitable; for, saith Poor Dick, Learning is to the studious, and riches to the careful, as well as Power to the bold, and heaven to the virtuous. And, farther, If you would have a faithful servant and one that you like, serve yourself. And again, he adviseth to circumspection and care, even in the smallest matters, because sometimes, A little neglect may breed great mischief; adding, For want of a nail the shoe was lost, for want of a shoe the horse was lost, and for want of a horse the rider was lost, being overtaken and slain by the enemy; all for want of care about a horseshoe nail.

"So much for industry, my friends, and attention to one's own business; but to these we must add frugality, if we would make our industry more certainly successful. A man may, if he knows not how to save as he gets, keep his nose all his life to the grindstone, and die not worth a groat at last. A fat kitchen makes a lean will, as Poor Richard says; and

> Many estates are spent in the getting,
> Since women for tea forsook spinning and
> knitting,
> And men for punch forsook hewing and splitting.

If you would be wealthy, says he, in another *Almanac*, Think of saving as well as of getting. The Indies have not made Spain rich, because her outgoes are greater than her incomes.

"Away, then, with your expensive follies, and you will not then have so much cause to complain of hard times, heavy taxes, and chargeable families; for, as Poor Dick says,

Women and wine, game and deceit,
Make the wealth small, and the wants great.

And farther, What maintains one vice would bring up two children. You may think, perhaps, that a *little* tea or a *little* punch now and then, diet a *little* more costly, clothes a *little* finer, and a *little* entertainment now and then, can be no *great* matter; but remember what Poor Richard says, Many a little makes a mickle; and farther, Beware of little expenses; A small leak will sink a great ship; and again, Who dainties love shall beggars prove; and moreover, Fools make feasts and wise men eat them.

"Here you are all got together at this vendue of fineries and knick knacks. You call them goods; but, if you do not take care, they will prove evils to some of you. You expect they will be sold cheap, and perhaps they may for less than they cost; but, if you have no occasion for them, they must be dear to you. Remember what Poor Richard says; Buy what thou hast no need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy necessaries. And again, At a great pennyworth pause awhile. He means that perhaps the cheapness is *apparent* only, and not *real;* or, the bargain, by straitening thee in thy business, may do thee more harm than good. For in another place he says, Many have been ruined by buying good pennyworths. Again, Poor Richard says, 'Tis foolish to lay out money in a purchase of repentance; and yet this folly is practiced every day at vendues for want of minding the *Almanac.* Wise men, as Poor Dick says, learn by others' harms, fools scarcely by their own; but *Felix quem facirent aliena pericula cautum.*[3] Many a one, for the sake of finery on the back have gone with a hungry belly, and half-starved their families. Silks and satins, scarlet and velvets, as Poor Richard says, put out the kitchen fire.

"These are not the necessaries of life; they can scarcely be called the conveniences; and yet, only because they look pretty, how many want to have them. The artificial wants of mankind thus become more numerous than the natural; and as Poor Dick says, For one poor person there are an hundred indigent. By these and other extravagancies the genteel are reduced to poverty, and forced to borrow of those whom they formerly despised, but who, through industry and frugality, have maintained their standing; in which case it appears plainly that, A plowman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees, as Poor Richard says. Perhaps they have had a small estate left them which they knew not the getting of; they think, 'Tis day and will never be night; that a little to be spent out of so much is not worth minding; a child and a fool, as Poor Richard says, imagine twenty shillings and twenty years can never be spent, but, Always take out of the meal tub and never putting in, soon comes to the bottom; then as Poor Dick says, When the well's dry, they know the worth of water. But this they might have known before, if they had taken his advice. If you would know the value of money, go and try to borrow some; for, he that goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing; and, indeed, so does he that lends to such people, when he goes to get it in again. Poor Dick farther advises and says:

Fond pride of dress is sure a very curse;
Ere fancy you consult, consult your purse.

And again, Pride is as loud a beggar as want, and a great deal more saucy. When you have bought one fine thing, you must buy ten more, that your appearance may be all of a piece; but Poor Dick says, 'Tis easier to suppress the first desire than to satisfy all that follow it. And 'tis as truly folly for the poor to ape the rich, as for the frog to swell in order to equal the ox.

Great estates may venture more,
But little boats should keep near shore.

'Tis, however, a folly soon punished; for, Pride that dines on vanity, sups on contempt, as Poor Richard says. And in another place, Pride breakfasted with Plenty, dined with Poverty, and supped with Infamy. And, after all, of what use is this pride of appearance, for which so much is risked, so much is suffered? It cannot promote health or ease pain; it makes no increase of merit in the person, it creates envy, it hastens misfortune.

What is a butterfly? At best
He's but a caterpillar dressed.
The gaudy fop's his picture just.

as Poor Richard says.

"But what madness must it be to run in debt for these superfluities! We are offered by the terms of this vendue six months' credit; and that, perhaps, has induced some of us to attend it, because we cannot spare the ready money, and hope now to be fine without it. But ah, think what you do when you run in debt; you give to another power over your liberty. If you cannot pay at the time, you will be ashamed to see your creditor; you will be in fear when you speak to him; you will make poor, pitiful, sneaking excuses, and by degrees come to lose your veracity, and sink into base, downright lying; for, as Poor Richard says, The second vice is lying, the first is running in debt. And again to the same purpose, Lying rides upon debt's back; whereas a freeborn Englishman ought not to be ashamed or afraid to see or speak to any man living. But poverty often deprives a man of all spirit and virtue. 'Tis hard for an empty bag to stand upright, as Poor Richard truly says.

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[3] Happy the man whom the experiences of others make cautious.

"What would you think of that prince, or that government, who should issue an edict forbidding you to dress like a gentleman or a gentlewoman, on pain of imprisonment or servitude? Would you not say that you are free, have a right to dress as you please, and that such an edict would be a breach of your privileges and such a government tyrannical? And yet you are about to put yourself under that tyranny, when you run in debt for such dress. Your creditor has authority, at his pleasure, to deprive you of your liberty by confining you in jail for life, or to sell you for a servant, if you should not be able to pay him. When you have got your bargain, you may, perhaps, think little of payment! But, Creditors, Poor Richard tells us, have better memories than debtors; and in another place says, Creditors are a superstitious sect, great observers of set days and times. The day comes round before you are aware, and the demand is made before you are prepared to satisfy it; or, if you bear your debt in mind, the term, which at first seemed so long, will, as it lessens, appear extremely short. Time will seem to have added wings to his heels as well as shoulders. Those have a short Lent, saith Poor Richard, who owe money to be paid at Easter. Then, since as he says, The borrower is a slave to the lender, and the debtor to the creditor, disdain the chain, preserve your freedom; and maintain your independency; be industrious and free; be frugal and free. At present, perhaps, you may think yourself in thriving circumstances, and that you can bear a little extravagance without injury; but

> For age and want save while you may;
> No morning sun lasts a whole day,

as Poor Richard says. Gain may be temporary and uncertain, but ever, while you live, expense is constant and certain; and, 'Tis easier to build two chimneys than to keep one in fuel, as Poor Richard says. So Rather go to bed supperless than rise in debt.

> Get what you can, and what you get, hold;
> 'Tis the stone that will turn all your lead into
> gold,

as Poor Richard says. And when you have got the philosopher's stone, sure you will no longer complain of bad times or the difficulty of paying taxes.

"This doctrine, my friends, is reason and wisdom; but, after all, do not depend too much upon your own industry and frugality and prudence, though excellent things; for they may all be blasted, without the blessing of Heaven; and, therefore, ask that blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them. Remember Job suffered, and was afterward prosperous.

"And now, to conclude, Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other, and scarce in that; for, it is true, We may give advice, but we cannot give conduct, as Poor Richard says. However, remember this: They that won't be counseled can't be helped, as Poor Richard says; and farther that, If you will not hear Reason, she'll surely rap your knuckles."

Thus the old gentleman ended his harangue. The people heard it, and approved the doctrine, and immediately practiced the contrary, just as if it had been a common sermon; for the vendue opened and they began to buy extravagantly notwithstanding his cautions, and their own fear of taxes. I found the good man had thoroughly studied my almanacs, and digested all I had dropped on these topics during the course of five-and-twenty years. The frequent mention he made of me must have tired any one else; but my vanity was wonderfully delighted with it, though I was conscious that not a tenth part of the wisdom was my own which he ascribed to me, but rather the gleanings I had made of the sense of all ages and nations. However, I resolved to be the better for the echo of it; and, though I had at first determined to buy stuff for a new coat, I went away resolved to wear my old one a little longer. Reader, if thou wilt do the same, thy profit will be as great as mine. I am, as ever, thine to serve thee,

Richard Saunders.

1757 1757

DIALOGUE BETWEEN FRANKLIN AND THE GOUT[1]

Midnight, October 22, 1780.

Franklin. Eh! Oh! Eh! What have I done to merit these cruel sufferings?

Gout. Many things; you have ate and drank[2] too freely, and too much indulged those legs of yours in their indolence.

Franklin. Who is it that accuses me?

Gout. It is I, even I, the Gout.

Franklin. What! my enemy in person?

Gout. No, not your enemy.

Franklin. I repeat it; my enemy; for you would not only torment my body to death, but ruin my good name; you reproach me as a glutton and a tippler; now all the world, that knows me, will allow that I am neither the one nor the other.

Gout. The world may think as it pleases; it is always very complaisant to itself, and sometimes to its friends; but I very well know that the quantity of meat and drink proper for a man who takes a reasonable degree of exercise, would be too much for another who never takes any.

Franklin. I take—Eh! Oh!—as much exercise—Eh!—as I can, Madam Gout. You know my sedentary state, and on that account, it would seem, Madam Gout, as if you might spare me a little, seeing it is not altogether my own fault.

Gout. Not a jot; your rhetoric and your politeness are thrown away; your apology avails nothing. If your situation in life is a sedentary one, your amusements, your recreations, at least, should be active. You ought to walk or ride; or, if the weather prevents that, play at billiards. But let us examine your course of life. While the mornings are long, and you have leisure to go abroad, what do you do? Why, instead of gaining an appetite for breakfast by salutary exercise, you amuse yourself with books, pamphlets, or newspapers, which commonly are not worth the reading. Yet you eat an inordinate breakfast, four dishes of tea with cream, and one or two buttered toasts, with slices of hung beef, which I fancy are not things the most easily digested. Immediately afterward you sit down to write at your desk, or converse with persons who apply to you on business. Thus the time passes till one, without any kind of bodily exercise. But all this I could pardon in regard, as you say, to your sedentary condition. But what is your practice after dinner? Walking in the beautiful gardens of those friends with whom you have dined would be the choice of men of sense; yours is to be fixed down to chess, where you are found engaged for two or three hours! This is your perpetual recreation, which is the least eligible of any for a sedentary man, because, instead of accelerating the motion of the fluids,[3] the rigid attention it requires helps to retard the circulation and obstruct internal secretions. Wrapt in the speculations of this wretched game, you destroy your constitution. What can be expected from such a course of living, but a body replete with stagnant humors, ready to fall a prey to all kinds of dangerous maladies, if I, the Gout, did not occasionally bring you relief by agitating those humors, and so purifying or dissipating them? If it was in some nook or alley in Paris, deprived of walks, that you played awhile at chess after dinner, this might be excusable; but the same taste prevails with you in Passy, Auteuil, Montmartre, or Sanoy,[4] places where there are the finest gardens and walks, a pure air, beautiful women, and most agreeable and instructive conversation; all which you might enjoy by frequenting the walks. But these are rejected for this abominable game of chess. Fie, then, Mr. Franklin! But amidst my instructions, I had almost forgot to administer my wholesome corrections; so take that twinge,—and that.

Franklin. Oh! Eh! Oh! Ohhh! As much instruction as you please, Madam Gout, and as many reproaches; but pray, madam, a truce with your corrections!

Gout. No, sir, no,—I will not abate a particle of what is so much for your good, —therefore—

Franklin. Oh! Ehhh!—It is not fair to say I take no exercise, when I do very often, going out to dine and returning in my carriage.

Gout. That, of all imaginable exercises is the most slight and insignificant, if you allude to the motion of a carriage suspended on springs. By observing the degree of heat obtained by different kinds of motion, we may form an estimate of the quantity of exercise given by each. Thus, for example, if you turn out to walk in winter with cold feet, in an hour's time you will be in a glow all over; ride on horseback, the same effect will scarcely be perceived by four hours' round trotting; but if you loll in a carriage, such as you have mentioned, you may travel all day, and gladly enter the last inn to warm your feet by a fire. Flatter yourself then no longer, that half an hour's airing in your carriage deserves the name of exercise. Providence has appointed few to roll in carriages, while he has given to all a pair of legs, which are machines infinitely more commodious and serviceable. Be grateful, then, and make a proper use of yours. Would you know how they forward the circulation of your fluids, in the very action of transporting you from place to place; observe when you walk, that all your weight is alternately thrown from one leg to the other; this occasions a great pressure on the vessels of the foot, and repels their contents; when relieved, by the weight being thrown on the other foot, the vessels of the first are allowed to replenish, and by a return of this weight, this repulsion again succeeds; thus accelerating the circulation of the blood. The heat produced in any given time, depends on the degree of this acceleration; the fluids are shaken, the humors attenuated, the secretions facilitated, and all goes well; the cheeks are ruddy, and health is established. Behold your fair friend[5] at Auteuil, a lady who received from bounteous nature more really useful science, than half a dozen such pretenders to philosophy as you have been able to extract from all your books. When she honors you with a visit, it is on foot. She walks all hours of the day, and leaves indolence, and its concomitant maladies, to be endured by her horses. In this see at once the preservative of her health and personal charms. But when you go to Auteuil, you must have your carriage, though it is no further from Passy to Auteuil than from Auteuil to Passy.

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[1] It is an interesting indication of the flexibility of Franklin's mind and the buoyancy of his spirit that he could in old age, with the fate of a nation often balancing in his hand, compose this playful little essay.

[2] These forms were not incorrect in Franklin's time.

[3] Any of the animal fluids: an echo of an old theory of medicine that the human body contained four humors, or fluids,—blood, phlegm, yellow bile (choler), and black bile (melancholy). Health depended upon keeping these active, and in the right proportions.

[4] Places in which Franklin resided or visited.

Franklin. Your reasonings grow very tiresome.

Gout. I stand corrected. I will be silent and continue my office; take that, and that.

Franklin. Oh! Ohh! Talk on, I pray you!

Gout. No, no; I have a good number of twinges for you tonight, and you may be sure of some more tomorrow.

Franklin. What, with such a fever! I shall go distracted. Oh! Eh! Can no one bear it for me?

Gout. Ask that of your horses; they have served you faithfully.

Franklin. How can you so cruelly sport with my torments?

Gout. Sport! I am very serious. I have here a list of offences against your own health distinctly written, and can justify every stroke inflicted on you.

Franklin. Read it then.

Gout. It is too long a detail; but I will briefly mention some particulars.

Franklin. Proceed. I am all attention.

Gout. Do you remember how often you have promised yourself, the following morning, a walk in the grove of Boulogne, in the garden de la Muette, or in your own garden, and have violated your promise, alleging at one time it was too cold, at another too warm, too windy, too moist, or what else you pleased; when in truth it was too nothing, but your insuperable love of ease?

Franklin. That I confess may have happened occasionally, probably ten times in a year.

Gout. Your confession is very far short of the truth; the gross amount is one hundred and ninety-nine times.

Franklin. Is it possible?

Gout. So possible, that it is fact; you may rely on the accuracy of my statement. You know M. Brillon's[6] gardens, and what fine walks they contain; you know the handsome flight of an hundred steps, which lead from the terrace above to the lawn below. You have been in the practice of visiting this amiable family twice a week, after dinner, and it is a maxim of your own, that "a man may take as much exercise in walking a mile, up and down stairs, as in ten on level ground." What an opportunity was here for you to have had exercise in both these ways! Did you embrace it, and how often?

Franklin. I cannot immediately answer that question.

Gout. I will do it for you; not once.

Franklin. Not once?

Gout. Even so. During the summer you went there at six o'clock. You found the charming lady with her lovely children and friends eager to walk with you, and entertain you with their agreeable conversation; and what has been your choice? Why, to sit on the terrace, satisfying yourself with the fine prospect, and passing your eye over the beauties of the garden below, without taking one step to descend and walk about in them. On the contrary, you call for tea and the chess-board; and lo! you are occupied in your seat till nine o'clock, and that besides two hours' play after dinner; and then, instead of walking home, which would have bestirred you a little, you step into your carriage. How absurd to suppose that all this carelessness can be reconcilable with health, without my interposition!

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[5] Madam Helvetius, one of Franklin's intimate circle.

[6] A French neighbor of Franklin's.

Franklin. I am convinced now of the justness of Poor Richard's remark, that "Our debts and our sins are always greater than we think for."

Gout. So it is. You philosophers are sages in your maxims, and fools in your conduct.

Franklin. But do you charge among my crimes, that I return in a carriage from Mr. Brillon's?

Gout. Certainly; for, having been seated all the while, you cannot object the fatigue of the day, and cannot want therefore the relief of a carriage.

Franklin. What then would you have me do with my carriage?

Gout. Burn it if you choose; you would at least get heat out of it once in this way; or, if you dislike that proposal, here's another for you; observe the poor peasants, who work in the vineyards and grounds about the villages of Passy, Auteuil, Chaillot, etc.; you may find every day, among these deserving creatures, four or five old men and women, bent and perhaps crippled by weight of years, and too long and too great labor. After a most fatiguing day, these people have to trudge a mile or two to their smoky huts. Order your coachman to set them down. This is an act that will be good for your soul; and, at the same time, after your visit to the Brillons', if you return on foot, that will be good for your body.

Franklin. Ah! how tiresome you are!

Gout. Well, then, to my office; it should not be forgotten that I am your physician. There.

Franklin. Ohhh! what a devil of a physician!

Gout. How ungrateful you are to say so! Is it not I who, in the character of your physician, have saved you from the palsy, dropsy, and apoplexy? one or other of which would have done for you long ago, but for me.

Franklin. I submit, and thank you for the past, but entreat the discontinuance of your visits for the future; for, in my mind, one had better die than be cured so dolefully. Permit me just to hint, that I have also not been unfriendly to *you*. I never feed physician or quack of any kind, to enter the list against you; if then you do not leave me to my repose, it may be said you are ungrateful too.

Gout. I can scarcely acknowledge that as any objection. As to quacks, I despise them; they may kill you indeed, but cannot injure me. And, as to regular physicians, they are at last convinced that the gout, in such a subject as you are, is no disease, but a remedy; and wherefore cure a remedy?—but to our business,—there.

Franklin. Oh! oh!—for Heaven's sake leave me! and I promise faithfully never more to play at chess, but to take exercise daily, and live temperately.

Gout. I know you too well. You promise fair; but, after a few months of good health, you will return to your old habits; your fine promises will be forgotten like the forms of last year's clouds. Let us then finish the account, and I will go. But I leave you with an assurance of visiting you again at a proper time and place; for my object is your good, and you are sensible now that I am your *real friend*.

1780 1780

PHILLIS WHEATLEY

Born, Africa, c. 1754, died, Boston, 1784. Phillis, a negro slave just from Africa, was bought in the Boston slave market in 1761 by John Wheatley, a resident of the city. She was about seven years old. Showing remarkable precocity, she was encouraged in study and made much of for her ability to write verses. She went with the family to London in 1773, where in the same year her poems were published, dedicated to the Countess of Huntingdon. It is interesting that one in her situation could so far master the verse form and appropriate the literary vocabulary and phraseology of the day that her work will bear not unfavorable comparison with much of the poetry then current in England and America.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE WILLIAM,
EARL OF DARTMOUTH,[1] HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTH AMERICA, ETC.

Hail, happy day, when, smiling like the
    morn,

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[1] The people of Boston in the commercial distress brought upon them by the repressive measures of the English government, hoped much from the Earl of Dartmouth, who was a man of great integrity and piety. He had before this been president of the Board of Trade and Foreign Plantations in London, the organization that had controlled the colonies.

Fair freedom rose New England to adorn;
The northern climb beneath her genial ray,
Dartmouth, congratulates thy blissful sway;
Elate with hope her race no longer mourns,
Each soul expands, each grateful bosom burns,
While in thine hand with pleasure we behold
The silken reins, and freedom's charms unfold.
Long lost to realms beneath the northern skies
She shines supreme, while hated faction dies:
Soon as appeared the goddess long desired,
Sick at the view, she languished and expired;
Thus from the splendors of the morning light
The owl in sadness seeks the caves of night.

No more, America, in mournful strain
Of wrongs, and grievance unredressed complain;
No longer shall thou dread the iron chain,
Which wanton tyranny with lawless hand
Had made, and with it meant to enslave the land.

Should you, my lord, while you peruse my song,
Wonder from whence my love of freedom sprung,
Whence flow the wishes for the common good,
By feeling hearts alone best understood,
I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate
Was snatched from Afric's fancied happy seat:
What pangs excruciating must molest,
What sorrows labor in my parents' breast?
Steeled was that soul, and by no misery moved,
That from a father seized his babe beloved;
Such such my case. And can I then but pray
Others may never feel tyrannic sway?

For favors past, great sir, our thanks are due,
And thee we ask thy favors to renew,
Since in thy power, as in thy will before,
To soothe the griefs, which thou didst once deplore.
May heavenly grace the sacred sanction give
To all thy works, and thou forever live
Not only on the wings of fleeting fame,
Though praise immortal crowns the patriot's name,
But to conduct to heaven's refulgent fane,
May fiery coursers sweep the ethereal plain,
And bear thee upwards to that blest abode,
Where, like the prophet, thou shalt find thy God.

1773

HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL WASHINGTON

Celestial choir![2] enthroned in realms of light,
Columbia's scenes of glorious toils I write.
While freedom's cause her anxious breast alarms,
She flashes dreadful in refulgent arms.
See mother earth her offspring's fate bemoan,
And nations gaze at scenes before unknown!
See the bright beams of heaven's revolving light
Involved in sorrows and the veil of night!
The goddess comes, she moves divinely fair,
Olive and laurel binds her golden hair:
Wherever shines this native of the skies,
Unnumbered charms and recent graces rise.
Muse! bow propitious while my pen relates
How pour her armies through a thousand gates,
As when Æolus[3] heaven's fair face deforms,
Enwrapped in tempest and a night of storms;
Astonished ocean feels the wild uproar,
The refluent surges beat the sounding shore;
Or thick as leaves in autumn's golden reign,
Such, and so many, moves the warrior's train.
In bright array they seek the work of war,
Where high unfurled the ensign waves in air.
Shall I to Washington their praise recite?
Enough thou knowest them in the fields of fight.
Thee, first in place and honors,—we demand
The grace and glory of thy martial band.
Famed for thy valor, for thy virtues more,
Hear every tongue thy guardian aid implore!

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[2] The muses.
[3] God of the winds.

One century scarce performed its destined round,
When Gallic powers[4] Columbia's fury found;
And so may you, whoever dares disgrace
The land of freedom's heaven-defended race!
Fixed are the eyes of nations on the scales,
For in their hopes Columbia's arm prevails.
Anon Britannia droops the pensive head,
While round increase the rising hills of dead.
Ah! cruel blindness to Columbia's state!
Lament thy thirst of boundless power too late.
Proceed, great chief, with virtue on thy side,
Thy every action let the goddess guide.
A crown, a mansion, and a throne that shine
With gold unfading, Washington! be thine.

1776

THOMAS GODFREY

Born, Philadelphia, 1736, died in North Carolina, 1763. Godfrey's father, a friend of Franklin, was a glazier and mathematician who died when the son was thirteen years old, leaving him to be a watchmaker's apprentice. After a short experience as a soldier, Godfrey removed to North Carolina, where, about 1759, he wrote *The Prince of Parthia*, a blank verse tragedy, the first drama written in America. This with his poems was printed in Philadelphia, 1765.

THE INVITATION[1]

Damon. Haste, Sylvia, haste, my charming maid!
Let's leave these fashionable toys:
Let's seek the shelter of some shade,
And revel in ne'er fading joys.
See, Spring in livery gay appears,
And winter's chilly blasts are fled;
Each grove its leafy honors rears,
And meads their lovely verdure spread.

Sylvia. Yes, Damon, glad I'll quit the town;
Its gayeties now languid seem:
Then sweets to luxury unknown
We'll taste, and sip the untainted stream.
In Summer's sultry noon-tide heat
I'll lead thee to the shady grove,
There hush thy cares, or pleased repeat
Those vows that won my soul to love.

Damon. When o'er the mountain peeps the dawn,
And round her ruddy beauties play,
I'll wake my love to view the lawn,
Or hear the warblers hail the day.
But without thee the rising morn
In vain awakes the cooling breeze;
In vain does nature's face adorn—
Without my Sylvia nought can please.

Sylvia. At night, when universal gloom
Hides the bright prospects from our view,
When the gay groves give up their bloom
And verdant meads their lovely hue,
Though fleeting specters round me move,
When in thy circling arms I'm prest,
I'll hush my rising fears with love,
And sink in slumber on thy breast.

Damon. The new-blown rose, whilst on its leaves
Yet the bright scented dew-drop's found,
Pleased on thy bosom whilst it heaves,
Shall shake its heavenly fragrance round.
Then mingled sweets the sense shall raise,
Then mingled beauties catch the eye:
What pleasure on such charms to gaze,
What rapture 'mid such sweets to lie!

Sylvia. How sweet thy words! But, Damon, cease,
Nor strive to fix me ever here;
Too well you know these accents please,
That oft have filled my ravished ear.
Come, lead me to these promised joys
That dwelt so lately on thy tongue;
Direct me by thy well-known voice,
And calm my transports with thy song!

1758 1758

A DITHYRAMBIC ON WINE

I

Come! let Mirth our hours employ,
The jolly God inspires;
The rosy juice our bosom fires,
And tunes our souls to joy.
See, great Bacchus[2] now descending,
Gay, with blushing honors crowned;
Sprightly Mirth and Love attending,
Around him wait,

---

[4] The forces of France in America overcome in the French and Indian War.

[1] Feebly conventional as this pastoral is, it is quite as good as many of its type produced at the same time by poets of reputation in England. Damon and Sylvia are conventional pastoral names for shepherd and shepherdess.

[2] God of wine and revelry.

In smiling state—
Let Echo resound
Let Echo resound
The joyful news all around.

II

Fond Mortals come, if love perplex,
In wine relief you'll find;
Who'd whine for woman's giddy sex
More fickle than the wind?
If beauty's bloom thy fancy warms,
Here see her shine,
Clothed in superior charms;
More lovely than the blushing morn,
When first the opening day
Bedecks the thorn,
And makes the meadows gay.
Here see her in her crystal shrine;
See and adore; confess her all divine,
The Queen of Love and Joy
Heed not thy Chloe's[3] scorn—
This sparkling glass,
With winning grace,
Shall ever meet thy fond embrace,
And never, never, never cloy,
No never, never cloy.

III

Here, Poet, see, Castalia's[4] spring—
Come, give me a bumper, I'll mount to the skies,
Another, another—'Tis done! I arise;
On fancy's wing,
I mount, I sing,
And now, sublime,
Parnassus' lofty top I climb—
But hark! what sounds are these I hear,
Soft as the dream of her in love,
Or zephyrs whispering through the grove?
And now, more solemn far than funeral woe,
The heavy numbers flow!
And now again,
The varied strain,
Grown louder and bolder, strikes quick on the ear,
And thrills through every vein.

IV

'Tis Pindar's[5] song!
His softer notes the fanning gales
Waft across the spicy vales,
While through the air,
Loud whirlwinds bear
The harsher notes along.
Inspired by wine,
He leaves the lazy crowd below,
Who never dared to peep abroad,
And, mounting to his native sky,
For ever there shall shine.
No more I'll plod
The beaten road;
Like him inspired, like him I'll mount high;
Like his my strain shall flow.

V

Haste, ye mortals! leave your sorrow;
Let pleasure crown today—tomorrow
Yield to fate.
Join the universal chorus,
Bacchus reigns
Ever great;
Bacchus reigns
Ever glorious—
Hark! the joyful groves rebound,
Sporting breezes catch the sound,
And tell to hill and dale around—
"Bacchus reigns"—
While far away,
The busy echoes die away.[6]

TIMOTHY DWIGHT

Born, Northampton, Massachusetts, 1752, died, New Haven, Connecticut, 1817. Dwight was a grandson of Jonathan Edwards. Precocious as a child, he entered Yale at thirteen and was chosen tutor at nineteen. He entered the ministry in 1777 and served as chaplain in the American army. From 1795 until his death he was president of Yale College. His published works include *The Conquest of Canaan*, 1785; *The Triumph of Infidelity*, 1788; *Greenfield Hill*, 1794; *Travels in New England and New York*, 1821-1822.

From THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN

[*The Battle of Ai*[1]]

. . . .

Now near the burning domes the squadrons stood,
Their breasts impatient for the scenes of blood:

---

[3] Conventional pastoral name for a young woman.

[4] A spring sacred to the muses, upon Mount Parnassus which was sacred to Apollo, god of poetry.

[5] Pindar, a Greek lyric poet of the fifth century, B. C., wrote hymns in honor of Dionysus, the Greek god of wine. Pindar's poetry is not, however, characteristically bacchanalian.

[6] "As our Poet appears so warm on his subject it may not be amiss to remark here, that he never drank any wine, and that his bumpers are all ideal, which may serve, perhaps, as a refutation of that noted adage, that a water drinker can never be a good Dithyrambic Poet." Duycknick's note in his *Cyclopædia of American Literature.*

[1] This fragment of a long epic, *The Conquest of Canaan,* is in the manner of the grandiose,

On every face a death-like glimmer sat,
The unblessed harbinger of instant fate.
High through the gloom, in pale and dreadful spires,
Rose the long terrors of the dark-red fires;
Torches, and torrent sparks, by whirlwinds driven,
Streamed through the smoke, and fired the clouded heaven;
As oft tall turrets sunk, with rushing sound,
Broad flames burst forth, and swept the ethereal round;
The bright expansion lightened all the scene,
And deeper shadows lengthened o'er the green.
Loud through the walls, that cast a golden gleam,
Crowned with tall pyramids of bending flame,
As thunders rumble down the darkening vales,
Rolled the deep, solemn voice of rushing gales:
The bands, admiring saw the wondrous sight,
And expectation trembled for the fight.

At once the sounding clarion breathed alarms;
Wide from the forest burst the flash of arms;
Thick gleamed the helms; and o'er astonished fields.
Like thousand meteors rose the flame-bright shields.
In gloomy pomp, to furious combat rolled
Ranks sheathed in mail, and chiefs in glimmering gold;
In floating luster bounds the dim-seen steed,
And cars unfinished, swift to cars to succeed:
From all the host ascends a dark-red glare,
Here in full blaze, in distant twinklings there;
Slow waves the dreadful light, as round the shore
Night's solemn blast with deep confusion roar:
So rushed the footsteps of the embattled train,
And send an awful murmur o'er the plain.

Tall in the opposing van bold IRAD stood,
And bid the clarion sound the voice of blood.
Loud blew the trumpet on the sweeping gales,
Rocked the deep groves, and echoed round the vales;
A ceaseless murmur all the concave fills,
Waves through the quivering camp and trembles o'er the hills.

High in the gloomy blaze the standards flew;
The impatient youth his burnished falchion drew;
Ten thousand swords his eager bands displayed,
And crimson terrors danced on every blade.
With equal rage, the bold Hazorian train
Poured a wide deluge o'er the shadowy plain;
Loud rose the songs of war, loud clanged the shields,
Dread shouts of vengeance shook the shuddering fields;
With mingled din, shrill, martial music rings,
And swift to combat each fierce hero springs.
So broad, and dark, a midnight storm ascends,
Bursts on the main, and trembling nature rends;
The red foam burns, the watery mountains rise,
One deep, unmeasured thunder heaves the skies;
The bark drives lonely; shivering and forlorn,
The poor, sad sailors wish the lingering morn;
Not with less fury rushed the vengeful train;
Not with less tumult roared the embattled plain.
Now in the oak's black shade they fought concealed;
And now they shouted through the open field;
The long, pale splendors of the curling flame
Cast o'er their polished arms a livid gleam;
An umbered luster floated round their way,

---

turgid epic laboriously affected in the pseudo-classic period of English literature three generations before, and in Dwight's day in vogue in New England. Dwight in *The Conquest of Canaan*, and Barlow in *The Columbiad*, are both merely imitators of an imitation: both fall ludicrously short of real epic attainment. The source of this selection is *Joshua* xi. Ai is a city and kingdom of Canaan, Hazor the one city of the Canaanites that Joshua burned, and Irad an Israelitish chieftain.

And lighted falchions to the fierce affray.
Now the swift chariots 'gainst the stubborn oak
Dashed; and the earth re-echoes to the shock.
From shade to shade the forms tremendous stream,
And their arms flash a momentary flame.
Mid hollow tombs as fleets an airy train,
Lost in the skies, or fading o'er the plain;
So visionary shapes, around the fight,
Shoot through the gloom, and vanish from the sight;
Through twilight paths the maddening coursers bound,
The shrill swords crack, the clashing shields resound.
There, lost in grandeur, might the eye behold
The dark-red glimmerings of the steel and gold;
The chief; the steed; the nimbly-rushing car;
And all the horrors of the gloomy war.
Here the thick clouds, with purple luster bright,
Spread o'er the long, long host, and gradual sunk in night;
Here half the world was wrapped in rolling fires,
And dreadful valleys sunk between the spires.
Swift ran black forms across the livid flame,
And oaks waved slowly in the trembling beam:
Loud rose the mingled noise; with hollow sound,
Deep rolling whirlwinds roar, and thundering flames resound.
 As drives a blast along the midnight heath,
Rushed raging IRAD on the scenes of death;
High o'er his shoulder gleamed his brandished blade,
And scattered ruin round the twilight shade.
Full on a giant hero's sweeping car
He poured the tempest of resistless war;
His twinkling lance the heathen raised on high,
And hurled it, fruitless, through the gloomy sky;
From the bold youth the maddening coursers wheel,
Gashed by the vengeance of his slaughtering steel;
'Twixt two tall oaks the helpless chief they drew;
The shrill car dashed; the cracked wheels rattling flew;
Crushed in his arms, to rise he strove in vain,
And lay unpitied on the dreary plain.

. . . .

1771-1774 1785

COLUMBIA[1]

Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,
The queen of the world, and the child of the skies;
Thy genius commands thee; with rapture behold,
While ages on ages thy splendors unfold.
Thy reign is the last and the noblest of time;
Most fruitful thy soil, most inviting thy clime;
Let the crimes of the East ne'er encrimson thy name;
Be freedom and science and virtue thy fame.

To conquest and slaughter let Europe aspire,
Whelm nations in blood, and wrap cities in fire:
Thy heroes the rights of mankind shall defend,
And triumphs pursue them, and glory attend.
A world is thy realm: for a world be thy laws,
Enlarged as thine empire, and just as thy cause;
On Freedom's broad basis that empire shall rise.
Extend with the main, and dissolve with the skies.

Fair Science her gates to thy sons shall unbar,
And the east see thy morn hide the beams of her star;
New bards and new sages, unrivaled, shall soar
To fame unextinguished when time is no more;
To thee, the last refuge of virtue designed,
Shall fly from all nations the best of mankind;
Here, grateful to Heaven, with transport shall bring
Their incense, more fragrant than odors of spring.

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[1] Composed when Dwight was stationed, as chaplain in the Revolutionary army, at West Point.

Nor less shall thy fair ones to glory ascend,
And genius and beauty in harmony blend;
The graces of form shall awake pure desire,
And the charms of the soul ever cherish the fire;
Their sweetness unmingled,[2] their manners refined,
And virtue's bright image instamped on the mind,
With peace and soft rapture shall teach life to glow,
And light up a smile in the aspect of woe.

Thy fleets to all regions thy power shall display,
The nations admire, and the ocean obey;
Each shore to thy glory its tribute unfold,
And the East and the South yield their spices and gold.
As the day-spring abounded, thy splendor shall flow,
And earth's little kingdoms before thee shall bow;
While the ensigns of union, in triumph unfurled,
Hush the tumult of war, and give peace to the world.

Thus, as down a lone valley, with cedars o'erspread,
From war's dread confusion I pensively strayed—
The gloom from the face of fair heaven retired,
The winds ceased to murmur, the thunders expired;
Perfumes, as of Eden, flowed sweetly along,
And a voice, as of angels, enchantingly sung:
"Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,
The queen of the world, and the child of the skies."

1777

From THE TRIUMPH OF INFIDELITY

[*The Smooth Divine*[1]]

There smiled the smooth Divine, unused to wound
The sinner's heart with hell's alarming sound.
No terrors on his gentle tongue attend;
No grating truths the nicest ear offend.
That strange new-birth, that methodistic grace,[2]
Nor in his heart nor sermons found a place.
Plato's fine tales he clumsily retold,
Trite, fireside, moral seesaws, dull as old;
His Christ and Bible placed at good remove,
Guilt hell-deserving, and forgiving love.
'T was best, he said, mankind should cease to sin:
Good fame required it; so did peace within.
Their honors, well he knew, would ne'er be driven;
But hoped they still would please to go to heaven.
Each week he paid his visitation dues;[3]
Coaxed, jested, laughed; rehearsed the private news;
Smoked with each goody, thought her cheese excelled;
Her pipe he lighted,[4] and her baby held.
Or placed in some great town, with lacquered shoes,
Trim wig, and trimmer gown, and glistening hose,
He bowed, talked politics, learned manners mild,
Most meekly questioned, and most smoothly smiled;
At rich men's jests laughed loud, their stories praised;
Their wives' new patterns gazed, and gazed, and gazed;
Most daintily on pampered turkeys dined;
Nor shrunk with fasting, nor with study pined:
Yet from their churches saw his brethren driven,
Who thundered truth, and spoke the voice of heaven,
Chilled trembling guilt in Satan's headlong path,
Charmed the feet back, and roused the ear of death.
"Let fools," he cried, "starve on, while prudent I
Snug in my nest shall live, and snug shall die."

. . . .

1788

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[2] unalloyed

[1] This selection is part of a long poetical satire called *The Triumph of Infidelity*, 1788, dedicated to M. Voltaire. Professor Wendell points out that the poem is directed specifically against the new liberalism of belief already growing up in Boston, centering in the worship at King's Chapel with its liturgy newly modified in 1785.

[2] The doctrines of the necessity of the new birth or conversion and of the presence in the heart of divine grace were fundamental with Methodism, and Methodism was held somewhat in contempt by the most liberal persons of other sects.

[3] pastoral calls due

[4] Smoking was not then a rare habit among women of the common people.

LOVE TO THE CHURCH[1]

I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode,
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.

I love thy church, O God!
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.

If e'er to bless thy sons
My voice or hands deny,
These hands let useful skill forsake,
This voice in silence die.

For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given
Till toils and cares shall end.

If e'er my heart forget
Her welfare or her woe,
Let every joy this heart forsake,
And every grief o'erflow.

Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways,
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.

Jesus, thou friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand from every snare and foe
Shall great deliverance bring.

Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.

1800

JOHN TRUMBULL

Born, Watertown, Connecticut, 1750, died, Detroit, Michigan, 1831. He was of an intellectual and influential family. He entered Yale in his fourteenth year, and was appointed tutor in 1771. He studied law with John Adams in Boston, was a member of the Connecticut legislature, and judge of the Connecticut Superior Court 1801-1825. His chief poems are *The Progress of Dulness*, 1772, and *M'Fingal*, 1775-83. He also contributed political articles to Connecticut newspapers. His *Poems* were published in 1820.

From THE PROGRESS OF DULNESS:[1]

PART I

OR THE ADVENTURES OF TOM BRAINLESS

"Our Tom has grown a sturdy boy;
His progress fills my heart with joy;
A steady soul, that yields to rule,
And quite ingenious too, at school.
Our master says, (I'm sure he's right)
There's not a lad in town so bright.
He'll cypher bravely, write and read,
And say his catechism and creed,
And scorns to hesitate or falter
In primer, spelling-book, or psalter.
Hard work indeed, he does not love it;
His genius is too much above it.
Give him a good substantial teacher,
I'll lay he'd make a special preacher.
I've loved good learning all my life;
We'll send the lad to college, wife."
Thus swayed by fond and sightless passion,
His parents hold a consultation;
If on their couch, or round their fire,
I need not tell, nor you inquire.
The point's agreed; the boy well pleased,
From country cares and labor eased;
No more to rise by break of day
To drive home cows, or deal out hay;
To work no more in snow or hail,
And blow his fingers o'er the flail,
Or mid the toils of harvest sweat
Beneath the summer's sultry heat,
Serene, he bids the farm good-bye,
And quits the plow without a sigh.
Propitious to their constant friend,
The powers of idleness attend

. . . .

A scholar see him now commence[2]
Without the aid of books or sense;
For passing college cures the brain,
Like mills to grind men young again.
The scholar-dress, that once arrayed him,

---

[1] This hymn, founded on *Psalm* cxxxvii, is perhaps the best of the Puritan hymns.

[1] The poem is a satire in three parts narrating in succession the adventures of Tom Brainless, Dick Hairbrain, and Miss Harriet Simper. When the poem was written, the author was a young tutor in Yale. He explains that "The subject is the state of the times in regard to literature and religion," and that the purpose is "to point out, in a clear, concise, and striking manner, those general errors, that hinder the advantages of education and the growth of piety." In its entirety the satire shows Trumbull, though not an iconoclast, to have been a warm advocate of reform in education. Satire of this kind appears constantly as one of the most popular forms of poetry in English literature from Dryden to Johnson, and even into the nineteenth century.

[2] The boy has meanwhile blundered through college and now "commences bachelor" at graduation.

The charm, *Admitto te ad gradum,*[3]
With touch of parchment can refine,
And make the veriest coxcomb shine,
Confer the gift of tongues at once,
And fill with sense the vacant dunce.
So kingly crowns contain quintessence
Of worship, dignity, and presence;
Give learning, genius, virtue, worth,
Wit, valor, wisdom, and so forth;
Hide the bald pate, and cover o'er
The cap of folly worn before.
  Our hero's wit and learning now may
Be proved by token of diploma,
Of that diploma, which with speed
He learns to construe and to read;
And stalks abroad with conscious stride,
In all the airs of pedant pride,
With passport signed for wit and knowledge,
And current under seal of college.

. . . .

  Now to some priest that's famed for teaching,
He goes to learn the art of preaching;
And settles down with earnest zeal
Sermons to study, and to steal.
Six months from all the world retires
To kindle up his covered fires;
Learns, with nice art, to make with ease
The scriptures speak whate'er he please;
With judgment, unperceived to quote
What Pool explained, or Henry wrote;[4]
To give the gospel new editions,
Split doctrines into propositions,
Draw motives, uses, inferences,
And torture words in thousand senses;
Learn the grave style and goodly phrase,
Safe handed down from Cromwell's days,[5]
And shun, with anxious care, the while,
The infection of a modern style;
Or on the wings of folly fly
Aloft in metaphysic sky;
The system of the world explain,
Till night and chaos come again;
Deride what old divines can say,
Point out to heaven a nearer way;
Explode all known established rules,
Affirm our fathers all were fools;
The present age is growing wise,
But wisdom in her cradle lies;
Late, like Minerva, born and bred,
Not from a Jove's, but scribbler's head,
While thousand youths their homage lend her,
And nursing fathers rock and tend her.
  Round him much manuscript is spread,
Extracts from living works, and dead,
Themes, sermons, plans of controversy,
That hack and mangle without mercy.
And whence to glad the reader's eyes,
The future dialogue shall rise.
  At length, matured the grand design,
He stalks abroad, a grave divine.

. . . .

  Now in the desk, with solemn air,
Our hero makes his audience stare;
Asserts with all dogmatic boldness,
Where impudence is yoked to dulness;
Reads o'er his notes with halting pace,
Masked in the stiffness of his face;
With gestures such as might become
Those statues once that spoke at Rome,[6]
Or Livy's ox, that to the state
Declared the oracles of fate,
In awkward tones, nor said, nor sung,
Slow rumbling o'er the faltering tongue.
Two hours his drawling speech holds on,
And names it preaching, when he's done.
  With roving tired, he fixes down
For life, in some unsettled town.
People and priest full well agree,
For why—they know no more than he.
Vast tracts of unknown land he gains,
Better than those the moon contains;
There deals in preaching and in prayer,
And starves on sixty pounds a year,
And culls his texts, and tills his farm,
Does little good, and little harm;
On Sunday, in his best array,
Deals forth the dulness of the day,
And while above he spends his breath,
The yawning audience nod beneath.
  Thus glib-tongued Mercury in his hand[7]

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[3] "I admit you to the degree . . .": part of the formula pronounced by the officer conferring the academic degree.

[4] English nonconformist divines of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, authors of biblical synopses and commentaries.

[5] The Puritan style was marked by much ecclesiastical and biblical phraseology such as was common in the days of Cromwell and was the habitual speech of the Protector himself.

[6] Reference may be to the work of Virgil, who, in medieval conception, was magician as well as poet and made a brazen head which spoke. Or Trumbull may have had in mind some such passage as in Virgil's *Georgics*, i. 476 ff. which recounts the omens at the time of Caesar's death: "There was a voice, too, heard by many through the still temple-groves, deeper than human; and specters of unearthly pallor were seen at the dead of night, and cattle—the tale is too dire to tell—spoke like men: See! the rivers stay their courses, the earth yawns, the ivory in the fanes sheds tears for sorrow, and the brass sweats." Conington's translation. Livy records several instances in which oxen spoke. In xxxv. 21, he says, "An ox belonging to the consul Cneius Domitius spoke these words, 'Rome, take care of thyself!'"

[7] Mercury, god both of eloquence and sleep, bore as his usual emblem the snake-twined wand possessed of magic powers.

Stretched forth the sleep-compelling wand,
Each eye in endless doze to keep—
The god of speaking, and of sleep.
1772 1772

From M'FINGAL[1]

CANTO I

THE TOWN-MEETING, A. M.

When Yankees, skilled in martial rule,[2]
First put the British troops to school;
Instructed them in warlike trade,
And new maneuvers of parade,
The true war-dance of Yankee reels,
And manual exercise of heels;
Made them give up, like saints complete,
The arm of flesh, and trust the feet,
And work, like Christians undissembling,
Salvation out, by fear and trembling;
Taught Percy fashionable races,[3]
And modern modes of Chevy Chases:
From Boston, in his best array,
Great 'Squire M'FINGAL took his way,
And graced with ensigns of renown,
Steered homeward to his native town.
His high descent our heralds trace
From Ossian's famed Fingalian race:[4]
For though their name some part may lack,
Old Fingal spelled it with a MAC;
Which great Macpherson, with submission,
We hope will add the next addition.
His fathers flourished in the Highlands
Of Scotia's fog-benighted islands;
Whence gained our 'Squire two gifts by right,
Rebellion and the second-sight.[5]
Of these, the first, in ancient days,
Had gained the noblest palm of praise,
'Gainst kings stood forth and many a crowned head
With terror of its might confounded;
Till rose a king with potent charm[6]
His foes by meekness to disarm,
Whom every Scot and Jacobite
Strait fell in love with at first sight;
Whose gracious speech with aid of pensions,
Hushed down all murmurs of dissensions,
And with the sound of potent metal
Brought all their buzzing swarms to settle;
Who rained his ministerial manna,[7]
Till loud Sedition sung hosanna;
The grave lords-bishops and the kirk
United in the public work;
Rebellion, from the northern regions,
With Bute and Mansfield[8] swore allegiance,
All hands combined to raze, as nuisance,
Of church and state the constitutions,[9]
Pull down the empire, on whose ruins
They meant to edify their new ones;
Enslave the American wildernesses,
And rend the provinces in pieces.
With these our 'Squire, among the valiant'st,

---

[1] This poem, the best American satire of the late eighteenth century, was undertaken, the author says, "with a political view, at the instigation of some of the leading members of the first Congress, who urged him to compose a satirical poem on the events of the campaign in the year 1775." He aimed to express, "in a poetical manner, a general account of the American contest, . . . and with as much impartiality as possible satirize the follies and extravagances of my countrymen as well as of their enemies." The first three cantos were published in Philadelphia in 1775 during the session of Congress. The indebtedness of Trumbull to Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* (1663), a satire upon the Puritans, is very evident, both in form and manner, yet Trumbull's wit is quite his own. Thirty editions were printed within a few years. M'Fingal represents the typical loyalist magistrate, assiduous in his support of law lest his office be taken from him. The mock epic or mock heroic of which this poem is a type, burlesques the heroic epic in structure, phrase, diction, and assumed gravity, often producing its best effects by a mingling of the lofty and the commonplace.

[2] This opening passage refers especially to the flight of the British regular troops before the colonial minute men from Concord to Boston, April 19, 1775.

[3] Sir Hugh Percy, in command of the British forces on this retreat, was said to be descended from the chieftain who led the English against the Scotch in the battle of Otterburn or, as it is often called, Chevy Chase, in 1388.

[4] James Macpherson, a Scotchman, published in 1762 an epic poem, *Fingal*, which he said was the work of Ossian, son of Fingal, a Celtic chieftain. The poem, though founded on epic fragments, is largely a forgery, the work of Macpherson himself. According to Scotch custom, Ossian should properly be called Ossian Mac Fingal, the son of Fingal. The last word in l. 22 should probably read *edition* in reference to the great popularity of Macpherson's work.

[5] The Highlanders had supported the Stuarts against the established kings of the House of Hanover. Second-sight, a kind of clairvoyance, was long believed in and practiced among them. The fourth canto of *M'Fingal* is the vision of the squire.

[6] George III. had begun his reign in the hope of reducing parties and leaders to his own will by means of royal patronage. By the Whigs he was thought too favorably inclined toward the Scotch, who had generally supported the Jacobites, followers of James (Jacobus) Stuart and his heirs, in their endeavor to put back the Stuarts on the English throne.

[7] Offices and pensions.

[8] John Stuart, Earl of Bute, was prime minister 1762-3. James Mansfield, solicitor-general was greatly disliked by the colonists, since his official duties often bore against them, and since they also suspected him of favoring the Catholics.

[9] The English ministers had proposed to "reform the American charters," an interference the colonists greatly dreaded.

Employed his time, and tools, and talents,
And found this new rebellion pleasing
As his old king-destroying treason.

. . . .

The Town, our hero's scene of action,
Had long been torn by feuds of faction,
And as each party's strength prevails,
It turned up different, heads or tails;
With constant rattling, in a trice,
Showed various sides, as oft as dice.
As that famed weaver, wife to Ulysses,[10]
By night her day's-work picked in pieces,
And though she stoutly did bestir her,
Its finishing was ne'er the nearer:
So did this town with ardent zeal
Weave cobwebs for the public weal,
Which when completed, or before,
A second vote in pieces tore.
They met, made speeches full long-winded,
Resolved, protested and rescinded;
Addresses signed; then chose committees
To stop all drinking of Bohea teas;[11]
With winds of doctrine veered about,
And turned all Whig committees out.[12]
Meanwhile our hero, as their head,
In pomp the Tory faction led,
Still following, as the 'Squire should please,
Successive on, like files of geese.
And now the town was summoned, greeting,
To grand parading of town-meeting;
A show, that strangers might appall,
As Rome's grave senate did the Gaul.[13]
High o'er the rout, on pulpit stairs,
Mid den of thieves in house of prayers,
(That house, which loth a rule to break
Served heaven but one day in the week,
Open the rest for all supplies
Of news, and politics, and lies)
Stood forth the constable; and bore
His staff, like Mercury's wand of yore,[14]
Waved potent round, the peace to keep,
As that laid dead men's souls to sleep.
Above and near the hermetic staff,
The moderator's[15] upper half
In grandeur o'er the cushion bowed,
Like Sol half seen behind a cloud.
Beneath stood voters of all colors,
Whigs, Tories, orators, and brawlers;
With every tongue in either faction
Prepared like minute-men for action;
Where truth and falsehood, wrong and right,
Draw all their legions forth to fight.
With equal uproar scarcely rave
Opposing winds in Æolus' cave;
Such dialogues with earnest face
Held never Balaam with his ass.

. . . .

Canto II

THE TOWN-MEETING, P. M.[16]

The Sun, who never stops to dine,
Two hours had passed the mid-way line,
And driving at his usual rate,
Lashed on his downward car of state.
And now expired the short vacation,
And dinner o'er in epic fashion,
While all the crew, beneath the trees,
Eat pocket-pies, or bread and cheese,
(Nor shall we, like old Homer,[17] care
To versify their bill of fare)
Each active party, feasted well,
Thronged in, like sheep, at sound of bell;
With equal spirit took their places,
And meeting oped with three *Oh Yesses*:[18]
When first, the daring Whigs to oppose,
Again the great M'Fingal rose,
Stretched magisterial arm amain,
And thus resumed the accusing strain.
"Ye Whigs attend, and hear affrighted
The crimes whereof ye stand indicted;
The sins and follies past all compass,
That prove you guilty, or *non compos*.
I leave the verdict to your senses,
And jury of your consciences;
Which though they're neither good nor true,
Must yet convict you and your crew.
"Ungrateful sons! a factious band,
That rise against your parent land!
Ye viper race, that burst in strife

---

[10] Penelope, in the twenty years' absence of her husband, Ulysses, was courted by many suitors. To these she declared that she would not marry until she had finished weaving a certain rich robe. Each night she would unravel what she had woven by day until she had delayed her suitors for three years. *Odyssey*, xix. 140.

[11] Until the tax on tea should be abolished.

[12] The colonial Whigs stood for more liberal ideas than the colonial Tories.

[13] There is a legend that when in B. C. 390 the victorious Gauls entered Rome, they were for a moment overawed by the sight of the Roman senators seated in their official seats in the Forum.

[14] See *The Progress of Dulness*, p. 142, note 7.

[15] chairman's

[16] The assembling of the voters of the township for an all-day's session or "town meeting" with an hour's interval for luncheon is a custom still observed in some states.

[17] Homer sometimes particularizes carefully the kinds and abundance of food at the feasts of his heroes.

[18] "Oyez," or "Oyes," meaning "Hear ye!" from the French verb *ouir*, hear, is the call of the crier for attention at the beginning of a session of court or town meeting.

The genial womb that gave you life,
Tear with sharp fangs and forked tongue
The indulgent bowels whence ye sprung;
And scorn the debt and obligation,
You justly owe the British nation,
Which since you cannot pay, your crew
Affect to swear was never due.
“Did not the deeds of England's primate[19]
First drive your fathers to this climate,
Whom jails and fines and every ill
Forced to their good against their will?
Ye owe to their obliging temper
The peopling your new-fangled empire,
While every British act and canon
Stood forth your *causa sine qua non.*[20]
Who'd seen, except for these restraints,
Your witches, Quakers, Whigs, and saints,
Or heard of Mather's famed *Magnalia,*[21]
If Charles and Laud had chanced to fail you?[22]
Did they not send your charters o'er,
And give you lands you owned before,[23]
Permit you all to spill your blood,
And drive out heathen where you could;
On these mild terms, that, conquest won,
The realm you gained should be their own?
And when of late attacked by those,
Whom her connection made your foes,
Did they not then, distressed by war,
Send generals to your help from far,[24]
Whose aid you owned, in terms less haughty,
And thankfully o'erpaid your quota?
Say, at what period did they grudge
To send you governor or judge,
With all their missionary crew,[25]
To teach you law and gospel too?
They brought all felons in the nation
To help you on in population;
Proposed their bishops to surrender,
And made their priests a legal tender,
Who only asked, in surplice clad,
The simple tithe[26] of all you had:
And now, to keep all knaves in awe,
Have sent their troops to establish law,
And with gunpowder, fire and ball,
Reform your people, one, and all.
Yet when their insolence and pride
Have angered all the world beside;
When fear and want at once invade,
Can you refuse to lend them aid,
And rather risk your heads in fight,
Than gratefully throw in your mite?
Can they for debts make satisfaction,
Should they dispose their realm at auction,
And sell off Britain's goods and land all
To France and Spain, by inch of candle?[27]
Shall good King George, with want oppressed,
Insert his name in bankrupt list,
And shut up shop, like failing merchant,
That fears the bailiffs should make search in't;
With poverty shall princes strive,
And nobles lack whereon to live?
Have they not racked their whole inventions
To feed their brats on posts and pensions;[28]
Made their Scotch friends with taxes groan,
And picked poor Ireland to the bone:
Yet have on hand, as well deserving,
Ten thousand bastards, left for starving?
And can you now, with conscience clear,
Refuse them an asylum here,
And not maintain, in manner fitting,
These genuine sons of mother Britain?”

. . . .

CANTO III

THE LIBERTY POLE[29]

Now warm with ministerial ire,
Fierce sallied forth our loyal 'Squire,
And on his striding steps attends
His desperate clan of Tory friends.

---

[19] William Laud, primate of England 1633-40, by his rigorous policy toward nonconformists caused thousands of these to settle in the colonies.

[20] indispensable cause or condition

[21] Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana; or Ecclesiastical History of New England.* See p. 53 ff.

[22] Charles I. was very slow to grant political rights to the colonists.

[23] The colonists felt that they had fully won their domain by force of conquest and that they held it more rightfully thus than by grace of the English sovereign.

[24] The generals sent over by England were often, like Braddock, incompetent to face the situations of colonial warfare. The colonies, however, supplied more than their quota of troops.

[25] There were now some two hundred and fifty Episcopal clergymen in the colonies, all missionaries under charge of the bishop of London. The colonists greatly feared that a bishop would be sent to America having temporal as well as spiritual powers, as in England.

[26] A tenth part. In England the church was supported by a tax of one-tenth the produce of the soil.

[27] By auction. A custom at auctions was to receive bids while a small section of candle burned, the highest offer before the falling of the wick being accepted.

[28] This refers to the creation of offices for the illegitimate offspring of the British aristocracy.

[29] Meanwhile, just when the debate between M'Fingal and the Whigs had waxed so hot as almost to lead to blows, a shouting from without had caused a sudden adjournment of the assembly.

When sudden met his wrathful eye
A pole ascending through the sky,
Which numerous throngs of Whiggish race
Were raising in the market-place.
Not higher school-boy's kites aspire,
Or royal mast, or country spire;
Like spears at Brobdignagian[30] tilting,
Or Satan's walking-staff in Milton.
And on its top, the flag unfurled
Waved triumph o'er the gazing world;
Inscribed with inconsistent types
Of liberty and thirteen stripes.[31]
Beneath, the crowd without delay
The dedication-rites essay,
And gladly pay, in ancient fashion,
The ceremonies of libation;
While briskly to each patriot lip
Walks eager round the inspiring flip:[32]
Delicious draught! whose powers inherit
The quintessence of public spirit;
Which whoso tastes, perceives his mind
To nobler politics refined;
Or roused to martial controversy,
As from transforming cups of Circe;[33]
Or warmed with Homer's nectared liquor,
That filled the veins of gods with ichor.
At hand for new supplies in store,
The tavern opes its friendly door,
Whence to and fro the waiters run,
Like bucket-men at fires in town.
Then with three shouts that tore the sky,
'Tis consecrate to Liberty.
To guard it from the attacks of Tories,
A grand committee culled of four is;
Who foremost on the patriot spot,
Had brought the flip, and paid the shot.
  By this, M'Fingal with his train
Advanced upon the adjacent plain,
And full with loyalty possessed,
Poured forth the zeal that fired his breast.
  "What mad-brained rebel gave commission,
To raise this May-pole of sedition?
Like Babel, reared by bawling throngs,
With like confusion too of tongues,
To point at heaven and summon down
The thunders of the British crown?
Say, will this paltry pole secure
Your forfeit heads from Gage's power?
Attacked by heroes brave and crafty,
Is this to stand your ark of safety;
Or driven by Scottish laird and laddie,
Think ye to rest beneath its shadow?
When bombs, like fiery serpents, fly,
And balls rush hissing through the sky,
Will this vile pole, devote to freedom,
Save like the Jewish pole in Edom;[34]
Or like the brazen snake of Moses,
Cure your cracked skulls and battered noses?
  "Ye dupes to every factious rogue
And tavern-prating demagogue,
Whose tongue but rings, with sound more full,
On the empty drumhead of his skull;
Behold you not what noisy fools
Use you, worse simpletons, for tools?
For liberty, in your own by-sense,[35]
Is but for crimes a patent license,
To break of law the Egyptian yoke,[36]
And throw the world in common stock;[37]
Reduce all grievances and ills
To Magna Charta of your wills;
Establish cheats and frauds and nonsense,
Framed to the model of your conscience;
Cry justice down, as out of fashion,
And fix its scale of depreciation;[38]
Defy all creditors to trouble ye,
And keep new years of Jewish jubilee;[39]
Drive judges out, like Aaron's calves,[40]
By jurisdiction of white staves,[41]
And make the bar and bench and steeple
Submit to our sovereign lord, the people;
By plunder rise to power and glory,
And brand all property, as Tory;
Expose all wares to lawful seizures
By mobbers or monopolizers;
Break heads and windows and the peace,
For your own interest and increase;
Dispute and pray and fight and groan

---

[30] Brobdingnag, or Brobdignag, was a land of giants described in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels;* Satan's staff, taller than a "pine hewn on Norwegian hills," is mentioned in *Paradise Lost*, i. 292.

[31] A satirical allusion to slavery.

[32] A liquor made of spirits sweetened and mixed with beer, and heated by stirring with a hot iron.

[33] By means of an enchanted liquor and other charms, Circe changed the companions of Ulysses into swine: *Odyssey* x. Nectar was the drink of the Homeric gods, ichor the liquid that filled their veins.

[34] When the fugitive Israelites, encamped in Edom, were bitten by serpents, Moses raised on a standard a serpent of brass upon which those who had been bitten might look and be saved from death. *Numbers* xxi, 6-9.

[35] A coined word meaning, apparently, nonsense. Cf. by-path.

[36] The law, which all must bear as the Israelites bore the yoke of Egyptian slavery.

[37] Reduce all ranks to a common level.

[38] Congress ascertained the course of the depreciation of the Continental currency by what was called the scale of depreciation.

[39] Every fiftieth year was by Jewish law a year of jubilee in which all slaves were set free, debts canceled, and all property was returned to its original owners.

[40] Moses destroyed—he did not drive out—the calf made by Aaron and worshiped by the idolators.

[41] In some cases, the colonists armed with white staves, symbols of order, had driven the King's judges from the bench.

For public good, and mean your own;
Prevent the law by fierce attacks
From quitting scores upon your backs;
Lay your old dread, the gallows, low,
And seize the stocks,[42] your ancient foe,
And turn them to convenient engines
To wreak your patriotic vengeance;
While all, your rights who understand,
Confess them in their owner's hand;
And when by clamors and confusions,
Your freedom's grown a public nuisance,
Cry "Liberty," with powerful yearning,
As he does "Fire!" whose house is burning;
Though he already has much more
Than he can find occasion for.
While every clown, that tills the plains,
Though bankrupt in estate and brains,
By this new light transformed to traitor,
Forsakes his plow to turn dictator,
Starts an haranguing chief of Whigs,
And drags you by the ears, like pigs.
All bluster, armed with factious license,
New-born at once to politicians.
Each leather-aproned dunce, grown wise,
Presents his forward face to advise,
And tattered legislators meet,
From every workshop through the street.
His goose the tailor finds new use in,
To patch and turn the Constitution;
The blacksmith comes with sledge and grate
To iron-bind the wheels of state;
The quack forbears his patients' souse,[43]
To purge the Council and the House;
The tinker quits his molds and doxies,
To cast[44] assembly-men and proxies.
From dunghills deep of blackest hue,
Your dirt-bred patriots spring to view,
To wealth and power and honors rise,
Like new-winged maggots changed to flies,
And fluttering round in high parade,
Strut in the robe, or gay cockade. . . .
For in this ferment of the stream
The dregs have worked up to the brim,
And by the rule of topsy-turvies,
The scum stands foaming on the surface.
You've caused your pyramid to ascend,
And set it on the little end.
Like Hudibras, your empire's made,
Whose crupper had o'ertopped his head,[45]
You've pushed and turned the whole world up-
Side down, and got yourselves at top,
While all the great ones of your state
Are crushed beneath the popular weight;
Nor can you boast, this present hour,
The shadow of the form of power.
For what's your Congress or its end?
A power, to advise and recommend;
To call forth troops, adjust your quotas—
And yet no soul is bound to notice;
To pawn your faith to the utmost limit,
But cannot bind you to redeem it;
And when in want no more in them lies,
Than begging from your state-assemblies;[46]
Can utter oracles of dread,
Like friar Bacon's brazen head,[47]
But when a faction dares dispute 'em,
Has ne'er an arm to execute 'em:
As though you chose supreme dictators,
And put them under conservators.
You've but pursued the self-same way
With Shakspere's Trinculo in the play;[48]
"You shall be viceroys here, 'tis true,
But we'll be viceroys over you."
What wild confusion hence must ensue?
Though common danger yet cements you:
So some wrecked vessel, all in shatters,
Is held up by surrounding waters,
But stranded, when the pressure ceases,
Falls by its rottenness to pieces.

. . . .

Such is the government you chose;
For this you bade the world be foes;
For this, so marked for dissolution,
You scorn the British constitution;
That constitution formed by sages,
The wonder of all modern ages;
Which owns no failure in reality,
Except corruption and venality;
And merely proves the adage just,
That best things spoiled corrupt to worst:
So man supreme in earthly station,
And mighty lord of this creation,
When once his corse is dead as herring,
Becomes the most offensive carrion,
And sooner breeds the plague, 'tis found,
Than all beasts rotting on the ground.

. . . .

Rise then, my friends, in terror rise,
And sweep this scandal from the skies.

---

[42] Instruments of punishment.

[43] Apparently, a copious draught of medicine.

[44] Perhaps, to add up votes. Legislative votes were often cast by proxy.

[45] The reference is to the grotesque figure of the knight, Hudibras. See *Hudibras*, I. i. 294.

[46] Under the Articles of Confederation, Congress could advise but could not enforce its wishes.

[47] Roger Bacon, a Franciscan monk of the thirteenth century, was said to have made a brazen head that could utter oracles.

[48] The drunken Stephano proposes to be ruler of the island and to make the monster, Caliban, and Trinculo, the jester, viceroys. *Tempest*, III. ii. 102.

You'll see their Dagon,[49] though well jointed,
Will shrink before the Lord's anointed;
And like old Jericho's proud wall,[50]
Before our ram's-horns prostrate fall."
This said, our 'Squire, yet undismayed,
Called forth the constable to aid,
And bade him read, in nearer station,
The riot-act and proclamation.
He swift advancing to the ring,
Began, "Our Sovereign Lord, the King"—
When thousand clamorous tongues he hears,
And clubs and stones assail his ears.
To fly was vain; to fight was idle;
By foes encompassed in the middle,
His hope, in stratagems, he found,
And fell right craftily to ground;
Then crept to seek an hiding place,
'Twas all he could, beneath a brace;
Where soon the conquering crew espied him,
And where he lurked, they caught and tied him.
At once with resolution fatal,
Both Whigs and Tories rushed to battle.
Instead of weapons, either band
Seized on such arms as came to hand.
And as famed Ovid paints the adventures
Of wrangling Lapithæ and Centaurs,[51]
Who at their feast, by Bacchus led,
Threw bottles at each other's head;
And these arms failing in their scuffles,
Attacked with andirons, tongs and shovels:
So clubs and billets, staves and stones
Met fierce, encountering every sconce,
And covered o'er with knobs and pains
Each void receptacle for brains;
Their clamors rend the skies around,
The hills rebellow to the sound;[52]
And many a groan increased the din
From battered nose and broken shin.
M'Fingal, rising at the word,
Drew forth his old militia sword;
Thrice cried "King George," as erst in distress,
Knights of romance invoked a mistress;
And brandishing the blade in air,
Struck terror through the opposing war.
The Whigs, unsafe within the wind
Of such commotion, shrunk behind.
With whirling steel around addressed,
Fierce through their thickest throng he pressed,
(Who rolled on either side in arch,
Like Red Sea waves in Israel's march)
And like a meteor rushing through,
Struck on their pole a vengeful blow.
Around, the Whigs, of clubs and stones
Discharged whole volleys, in platoons,
That o'er in whistling fury fly;
But not a foe dares venture nigh.
And now perhaps with glory crowned
Our 'Squire had felled the pole to ground,
Had not some Power, a Whig at heart,
Descended down and took their part;
(Whether 'twere Pallas, Mars or Iris,[53]
'Tis scarce worth while to make inquiries)
Who at the nick of time alarming,
Assumed the solemn form of Chairman,
Addressed a Whig, in every scene
The stoutest wrestler on the green,
And pointed where the spade was found,
Late used to set their pole in ground,
And urged, with equal arms and might,
To dare our 'Squire to single fight.
The Whig thus armed, untaught to yield,
Advanced tremendous to the field:
Nor did M'Fingal shun the foe,
But stood to brave the desperate blow;
While all the party gazed, suspended
To see the deadly combat ended;
And Jove in equal balance weighed
The sword against the brandished spade.
He weighed; but lighter than a dream,
The sword flew up, and kicked the beam.
Our 'Squire on tiptoe rising fair
Lifts high a noble stroke in air,
Which hung not, but like dreadful engines,
Descended on his foe in vengeance.
But ah! in danger, with dishonor
The sword perfidious fails its owner;
That sword, which oft had stood its ground,
By huge trainbands encircled round;
And on the bench, with blade[54] right loyal,
Had won the day at many a trial,
Of stones and clubs had braved the alarms,
Shrunk from these new Vulcanian arms.[55]
The spade so tempered from the sledge,
Nor keen nor solid harmed its edge,
Now met it, from his arm of might,
Descending with steep force to smite;

---

[49] The idol of Dagon, chief god of the Philistines, had the figure of a man joined to the tail of a fish. 1 *Samuel* v. 1-5.

[50] The walls of the heathen city Jericho fell at the blast of the trumpets of the besieging army of Israelites. *Joshua* vi. 20.

[51] At the marriage of Pirithous, king of the Lapithæ, and Hippodamia, the Centaurs, who were guests, attempted violence to the bride and a battle ensued.

[52] Cf. Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, Canto v. 49-51.

[53] The passage is strongly reminiscent of the *Iliad* and other epics where the gods and goddesses take personal part in the contests of men. As mock-epic the poem is at its best here, and compares favorably with *Hudibras* or with Pope's *Rape of the Lock*.

[54] In New England, judges wore swords when presiding on the bench.

[55] The arms of Achilles were forged by Vulcan. From the shield, the spear of Hector recoiled. *Iliad*, xviii.; xxii. 290.

The blade snapped short—and from his hand,
With rust embrowned the glittering sand.
Swift turned M'Fingal at the view,
And called to aid the attendant crew,
In vain; the Tories all had run,
When scarce the fight was well begun;
Their setting wigs he saw decreased
Far in the horizon toward the west.
Amazed he viewed the shameful sight,
And saw no refuge, but in flight:
But age unwieldy checked his pace,
Though fear had winged his flying race;
For not a trifling prize at stake;
No less than great M'Fingal's back.
With legs and arms he worked his course,
Like rider that outgoes his horse,
And labored hard to get away, as
Old Satan struggling on through chaos;[56]
Till looking back, he spied in rear
The spade-armed chief advanced too near:
Then stopped and seized a stone, that lay
An ancient landmark near the way;
Nor shall we as old bards have done,
Affirm it weighed an hundred ton;
But such a stone, as at a shift
A modern might suffice to lift,
Since men, to credit their enigmas,
Are dwindled down to dwarfs and pigmies,
And giants exiled with their cronies
To Brobdignags and Patagonias.
But while our hero turned him round,
And tugged to raise it from the ground,
The fatal spade discharged a blow
Tremendous on his rear below:
His bent knee failed, and void of strength
Stretched on the ground his manly length.
Like ancient oak o'erturned, he lay,
Or tower to tempests fallen a prey,
Or mountain sunk with all his pines,
Or flower the plow to dust consigns,
And more things else—but all men know 'em,
If slightly versed in epic poem.
At once the crew, at this dread crisis,
Fall on, and bind him, ere he rises;
And with loud shouts and joyful soul,
Conduct him prisoner to the pole.
When now the mob in lucky hour
Had got their enemies in their power,
They first proceed, by grave command,
To take the constable in hand.
Then from the pole's sublimest top
The active crew let down the rope,
At once its other end in haste bind,
And make it fast upon his waistband;
Till like the earth, as stretched on tenter,[57]
He hung self-balanced on his center.
Then upwards, all hands hoisting sail,
They swung him, like a keg of ale,
Till to the pinnacle in height
He vaulted, like balloon or kite.
As Socrates of old at first did
To aid philosophy get hoisted,
And found his thoughts flow strangely clear,
Swung in a basket in mid air:[58]
Our culprit thus, in purer sky,
With like advantage raised his eye,
And looking forth in prospect wide,
His Tory errors clearly spied,
And from his elevated station,
With bawling voice began addressing.
  "Good gentlemen and friends and kin,
For Heaven's sake hear, if not for mine!
I here renounce the Pope, the Turks,
The King, the Devil and all their works;
And will, set me but once at ease,
Turn Whig or Christian, what you please;
And always mind your rules so justly,
Should I live long as old Methuselah,
I'll never join in British rage,
Nor help Lord North, nor General Gage;
Nor lift my gun in future fights,
Nor take away your charter-rights;
Nor overcome your new-raised levies,
Destroy your towns, nor burn your navies;
Nor cut your poles down while I've breath,
Though raised more thick than hatchel-teeth:[59]
But leave King George and all his elves
To do their conquering work themselves."
  This said, they lowered him down in state,
Spread at all points, like falling cat;
But took a vote first on the question,
That they'd accept this full confession,
And to their fellowship and favor,
Restore him on his good behavior.
  Not so our 'Squire submits to rule,
But stood, heroic as a mule.
"You'll find it all in vain," quoth he,
"To play your rebel tricks on me.
All punishments the world can render,
Serve only to provoke the offender;
The will gains strength from treatment horrid,
As hides grow harder when they're curried.

---

[56] On his journey from the gates of hell through chaos to the bounds of the starry universe. *Paradise Lost,* ii. 880-1055.

[57] Cloth when first woven or after dyeing is stretched on tenters or tenter-hooks to preserve the shape.

[58] In his comedy *The Clouds* Aristophanes figures Socrates suspended in a basket above the earth in order to enjoy a finer and clearer atmosphere for philosophic speculation.

[59] An implement consisting of a board thickly set with sharp spikes, used in separating the fibers of flax or hemp.

No man e'er felt the halter draw,
With good opinion of the law;
Or held in method orthodox
His love of justice, in the stocks;
Or failed to lose by sheriff's shears
At once his loyalty and ears.[60]
Have you made Murray[61] look less big,
Or smoked old Williams to a Whig?
Did our mobbed Oliver quit his station,
Or heed his vows of resignation?
Has Rivington, in dread of stripes,
Ceased lying since you stole his types?
And can you think my faith will alter,
By tarring, whipping or the halter?
I'll stand the worst; for recompense
I trust King George and Providence.
And when with conquest gained I come,
Arrayed in law and terror home,
Ye'll rue this inauspicious morn,
And curse the day when ye were born,
In Job's high style of imprecations,[62]
With all his plagues, without his patience."
Meanwhile beside the pole, the guard
A bench of justice had prepared,
Where sitting round in awful sort
The grand committee hold their court;
While all the crew, in silent awe,
Wait from their lips the lore of law.
Few moments with deliberation
They hold the solemn consultation;
When soon in judgment all agree,
And clerk proclaims the dread decree;
"That 'Squire M'Fingal having grown
The vilest Tory in the town,
And now in full examination
Convicted by his own confession,
Finding no tokens of repentance,
This court proceeds to render sentence:
That first the mob a slip-knot single
Tie round the neck of said M'Fingal,
And in due form do tar him next,
And feather, as the law directs;
Then through the town attendant ride him
In cart with constable beside him,
And having held him up to shame,
Bring to the pole, from whence he came."
Forthwith the crowd proceed to deck
With haltered noose M'Fingal's neck,
While he in peril of his soul
Stood tied half-hanging to the pole;
Then lifting high the ponderous jar,
Poured o'er his head the smoking tar.
With less profusion once was spread
Oil on the Jewish monarch's head,[63]
That down his beard and vestments ran,
And covered all his outward man.
As when (so Claudian sings) the gods
And earth-born giants fell at odds,
The stout Enceladus[64] in malice
Tore mountains up to throw at Pallas;
And while he held them o'er his head,
The river, from their fountains fed,
Poured down his back its copious tide,
And wore its channels in his hide:
So from the high-raised urn the torrents
Spread down his side their various currents;
His flowing wig, as next the brim,
First met and drank the sable stream;
Adown his visage stern and grave
Rolled and adhered the viscid wave;
With arms depending as he stood,
Each cuff capacious holds the flood;
From nose and chin's remotest end,
The tarry icicles descend;
Till all o'erspread, with colors gay,
He glittered to the western ray,
Like sleet-bound trees in wintry skies,
Or Lapland idol carved in ice.
And now the feather-bag displayed
Is waved in triumph o'er his head,
And clouds him o'er with feathers missive,
And down, upon the tar, adhesive:
Not Maia's son,[65] with wings for ears,
Such plumage round his visage wears;
Nor Milton's six-winged angel[66] gathers
Such superfluity of feathers.
Now all complete appears our 'Squire,
Like gorgon or chimæra dire;[67]
Nor more could boast on Plato's plan[68]
To rank among the race of man,
Or prove his claim to human nature,
As a two-legged, unfeathered creature.
Then on the fatal cart, in state
They raised our grand Duumvirate.
And as at Rome a like committee,
Who found an owl within their city,
With solemn rites and grave processions
At every shrine performed lustrations,[69]
And, lest infection might take place
From such grim fowl with feathered face,
All Rome attends him through the street

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[60] Cropping the ears was a punishment not unknown in New England.

[61] The men mentioned here were all prominent loyalists of Boston or New York, most of whom were mobbed. Oliver was "smoked" in a room with a covered chimney. Rivington, a New York printer and publisher, was mobbed and his press destroyed.

[62] Job cursed the day in which he was born. *Job* iii. 2 ff.

[63] Perhaps the author has in mind *Psalms* cxxxiii. 2. If so the reference is not exact.

[64] Enceladus was one of the giants who disputed the sovereignty of Zeus, and Athene (Pallas).

[65] Mercury of the winged cap.

[66] Raphael: *Paradise Lost,* v. 277.

[67] *Paradise Lost,* ii. 628.

[68] Plato described man as a featherless biped.

[69] An owl found in Rome was regarded as a prodigy of evil omen and, after being taken from temple to temple where sacrifices were performed, was released in a wood outside the city.

In triumph to his country seat:
With like devotion all the choir
Paraded round our awful 'Squire;
In front the martial music comes
Of horns and fiddles, fifes and drums,
With jingling sound of carriage bells,
And treble creak of rusted wheels.
Behind, the crowd, in lengthened row
With proud procession, closed the show.
And at fit periods every throat
Combined in universal shout;
And hailed great Liberty in chorus,
Or bawled "Confusion to the Tories."
Not louder storm the welkin braves
From clamors of conflicting waves;
Less dire in Lybian wilds the noise
When ravening lions lift their voice;
Or triumphs at town-meetings made,
On passing votes to regulate trade.[70]
Thus having borne them round the town,
Last at the pole they set them down;
And to the tavern take their way
To end in mirth the festal day.
And now the mob, dispersed and gone,
Left 'Squire and constable alone.
The constable with rueful face
Leaned sad and solemn o'er a brace;
And fast beside him, cheek by jowl,
Stuck 'Squire M'Fingal 'gainst the pole,
Glued by the tar to his rear applied,
Like barnacle on vessel's side.
But though his body lacked physician,
His spirit was in worse condition.
He found his fears of whips and ropes
By many a dram outweighed his hopes.
As men in jail without mainprize[71]
View everything with other eyes,
And all goes wrong in church and state,
Seen through perspective of the grate:
So now M'Fingal's second-sight
Beheld all things in gloomier light;
His visual nerve, well purged with tar,
Saw all the coming scenes of war.
As his prophetic soul grew stronger,
He found he could hold in no longer.
First from the pole, as fierce he shook,
His wig from pitchy durance broke,
His mouth unglued, his feathers fluttered
His tarred skirts cracked, and thus he uttered.
"Ah, Mr. Constable, in vain
We strive 'gainst wind and tide and rain!
Behold my doom! this feathery omen
Portends what dismal times are coming.
Now future scenes, before my eyes,
And second-sighted forms arise.
I hear a voice, that calls away,
And cries 'The Whigs will win the day.'
My beckoning genius gives command,
And bids me fly the fatal land;
Where changing name and constitution,
Rebellion turns to revolution,
While loyalty, oppressed, in tears,
Stands trembling for its neck and ears.
"Go, summon all our brethren, greeting,
To muster at our usual meeting;
There my prophetic voice shall warn 'em
Of all things future that concern 'em,
And scenes disclose on which, my friend,
Their conduct and their lives depend.
There I—but first 'tis more of use,
From this vile pole to set me loose;
Then go with cautious steps and steady,
While I steer home and make all ready."[72]

1775 1775

[ANONYMOUS]

HALE IN THE BUSH[1]

The breezes went steadily through the tall pines,
A-saying "Oh! hu-ush!" a-saying "Oh! hu-ush!"
As stilly stole by a bold legion of horse,
For Hale in the bush, for Hale in the bush.

"Keep still!" said the thrush, as she nestled her young
In a nest by the road, in a nest by the road;
"For the tyrants are near, and with them appear
What bodes us no good, what bodes us no good."

The brave captain heard it, and thought of his home
In a cot by the brook, in a cot by the brook;
With mother and sister and memories dear,
He so gaily forsook, he so gaily forsook.

Cooling shades of the night were coming apace,
The tattoo had beat, the tattoo had beat:
The noble one sprang from his dark lurking-place
To make his retreat, to make his retreat.

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[70] In early colonial days, prices were regulated by town-meetings or the "general court" of the colony.

[71] surety, bail

[72] The fourth and last canto tells of a secret meeting of Tories at night in M'Fingal's cellar, at which the squire recounts visions that have come to him, and prophesies the Revolution and the complete triumph of the Whigs. See notes 2 and 5, p. 143.

[1] This anonymous ballad is a tribute to Nathan Hale, hanged as a spy Sept. 22, 1776. Hale's last words were, "I regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

He warily trod on the dry rustling leaves,
As he passed through the wood, as he passed through the wood,
And silently gained his rude launch on the shore,
As she played with the flood, as she played with the flood.

The guards of the camp on that dark dreary night,
Had a murderous will, had a murderous will:
They took him and bore him afar from the shore,
To a hut on the hill, to a hut on the hill.

No mother was there, nor a friend who could cheer,
In that little stone cell, in that little stone cell;
But he trusted in love from his Father above—
In his heart all was well, in his heart all was well.

An ominous owl with his solemn bass voice
Sat moaning hard by, sat moaning hard by:
"The tyrant's proud minions most gladly rejoice,
For he must soon die, for he must soon die."

The brave fellow told them, no thing he restrained,—
The cruel gen'ral; the cruel gen'ral!—
His errand from camp, of the ends to be gained,
And said that was all, and said that was all.

They took him and bound him and bore him away,
Down the hill's grassy side, down the hill's grassy side.
'T was there the base hirelings, in royal array,
His cause did deride, his cause did deride.

Five minutes were given, short moments, no more,
For him to repent, for him to repent.
He prayed for his mother—he asked not another,—
To heaven he went, to heaven he went.

The faith of a martyr the tragedy showed,
As he trod the last stage, as he trod the last stage.
And Britons will shudder at gallant Hale's blood,
As his words do presage, as his words do presage:

"Thou pale king of terrors, thou life's gloomy foe,
Go frighten the slave, go frighten the slave;
Tell tyrants, to you their allegiance they owe—
No fears for the brave, no fears for the brave!"

1776

FRANCIS HOPKINSON

Born, Philadelphia, 1737, died there, 1791. He attended the school now become the University of Pennsylvania, was in England for some two years, studied law, and in 1779 was appointed Judge of Admiralty of the state of Pennsylvania. He was a writer of rather sprightly prose and verse satire, among which *A Pretty Story*, 1774; *The Prophecy*, 1776; *The Political Catechism*, 1777, are leading titles. His works were collected in 1792.

A CAMP BALLAD

Make room, oh! ye kingdoms in hist'ry renowned
Whose arms have in battle with glory been crowned,
Make room for America, another great nation,
Arises to claim in your council a station.

Her sons fought for freedom, and by their own bravery
Have rescued themselves from the shackles of slavery,
America's free, and though Britain abhorred it,
Yet fame a new volume prepares to record it.

Fair freedom in Britain her throne had erected,
But her sons growing venal, and she disrespected;
The goddess offended forsook the base nation,
And fixed on our mountains a more honored station.

With glory immortal she here sits enthroned.
Nor fears the vain vengeance of Britain disowned,

Whilst Washington guards her with heroes surrounded,
Her foes shall with shameful defeat be confounded.

To arms then, to arms, 'tis fair freedom invites us;
The trumpet shrill sounding to battle excites us;
The banners of virtue unfurled, shall wave o'er us,
Our hero leads on, and the foe fly before us.

On Heaven and Washington placing reliance,
We'll meet the bold Briton, and bid him defiance.
Our cause we'll support, for 'tis just and 'tis glorious;
When men fight for freedom they must be victorious.

1777

DESCRIPTION OF A CHURCH

As late beneath the hallowed roof I trod,
Where saints in holy rapture seek their God;
Where heart-stung sinners suing heaven for grace,
With tears repentant consecrate the place.
Oh! how my soul was struck with what I saw,
And shrunk within me in religious awe:

The massy walls, which seemed to scorn the rage
Of battering tempests and of moldering age,
In long perspective stretched, till breadth and height
Were almost lost in distance from the sight;
With monumental decorations hung,
They spoke morality with silent tongue.
There, sorrowing seraphs heavenward lift their eyes,
And little cherubs[1] weep soft elegies.
I trod—and started at the mighty noise;
The hollow pavement lifted up its voice;
The swelling arch received the rising sound,
Responsive to the stroke the walls resound;
And sent it murmuring to the vaults around,
Through lengthened aisles prolonged the solemn sound.

Far in the west,[2] and noble to the sight,
The gilded organ rears its towering height:
And hark! methinks I from its bosom hear,
Soft issuing sounds that steal upon the ear
And float serenely on the liquid air.
Now by degrees more bold and broad they grow,
And riot loosely through the aisles below;
Till the full organ lifts its utmost voice,
And my heart shudders at the powerful noise:
Like the last trump, one note is heard to sound
That all the massy pillars tremble round:
That firm fixed building shivers on its base,
And vast vibration fills the astonished place:
The marble pavements seem to feel their doom,
And the bones rattle in each hollow tomb.

But now the blast harmonious dies away,
And tapers gently in a fine decay:
The melting sounds on higher pinions fly,
And seem to fall soft oozing from on high;
Like evening dew they gently spread around
And shed the sweetness of heart-thrilling sound;
Till grown too soft, too fine for mortal ear,
The dying strains dissolve in distant air.
Methought I heard a flight of angels rise,
Most sweetly chaunting as they gained the skies:
Methought I heard their lessening sound decay
And fade and melt and vanish quite away.

Hail heaven-born music! by thy power we raise
The uplifted soul to acts of highest praise;
Oh! I would die with music melting round,
And float to bliss upon a sea of sound.

c 1777

THE BATTLE OF THE KEGS[1]

Gallants, attend, and hear a friend
Trill forth harmonious ditty:
Strange things I'll tell, which late befell
In Philadelphia city.

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[1] Figures of seraphs and cherubs, orders of angels, were much used in eighteenth century and earlier plastic decoration of churches.

[2] The usual orientation of the Christian church places the altar at the eastern end, leaving the western end free for the organ.

[1] The incident on which the ballad was founded took place during Sir William Howe's occupation of Philadelphia (1777-1778) while Washington was at Valley Forge.

"The ballad was occasioned by a real incident. Certain machines, in the form of kegs, charged with gunpowder, were sent down the river to annoy the British shipping then at Philadelphia. The danger of these machines being discovered, the British manned the

'Twas early day, as poets say,
Just when the sun was rising,
A soldier stood on a log of wood
And saw a thing surprising.

As in amaze he stood to gaze,
The truth can't be denied, sir,
He spied a score of kegs or more
Come floating down the tide, sir.

A sailor, too, in jerkin blue,
This strange appearance viewing,
First damned his eyes, in great surprise,
Then said, "Some mischief's brewing:

"These kegs, I'm told, the rebels hold,
Packed up like pickled herring;
And they're come down to attack the town,
In this new way of ferrying."

The soldier flew, the sailor too,
And scared almost to death, sir,
Wore out their shoes to spread the news,
And ran till out of breath, sir.

Now up and down throughout the town
Most frantic scenes were acted;
And some ran here and others there,
Like men almost distracted.

Some fire cried, which some denied,
But said the earth had quaked;
And girls and boys, with hideous noise,
Ran through the streets half naked.

Sir William, he, snug as a flea,
Lay all this time a snoring,
Nor dreamed of harm, as he lay warm,
. . . .

Now in a fright he starts upright,
Awaked by such a clatter;
He rubs his eyes and boldly cries,
"For God's sake, what's the matter?"

At his bedside he then espied
Sir Erskine at command, sir:
Upon one foot he had one boot,
And t' other in his hand, sir.

"Arise, arise!" Sir Erskine cries;
"The rebels, more 's the pity,
Without a boat are all afloat
And ranged before the city.

"The motley crew, in vessels new,
With Satan for their guide, sir,
Packed up in bags, or wooden kegs,[2]
Come driving down the tide, sir,

"Therefore prepare for bloody war:
These kegs must all be routed,
Or surely we despised shall be,
And British courage doubted."

The royal band now ready stand,
All ranged in dread array, sir,
With stomachs stout, to see it out,
And make a bloody day, sir.

The cannons roar from shore to shore,
The small arms make a rattle;
Since wars began, I'm sure no man
Ere saw so strange a battle.

The rebel dales, the rebel vales,
With rebel trees surrounded,
The distant woods, the hills and floods,
With rebel echoes sounded.

The fish below swam to and fro,
Attacked from every quarter:
"Why sure," thought they, "the devil's to pay
'Mongst folks above the water."

The kegs, 'tis said, though strongly made
Of rebel staves and hoops, sir,
Could not oppose their powerful foes,
The conquering British troops, sir.

From morn till night these men of might
Displayed amazing courage,
And when the sun was fairly down
Retired to sup their porridge.

An hundred men, with each a pen,
Or more, upon my word, sir,
It is most true would be too few
Their valor to record, sir.

Such feats did they perform that day
Against those wicked kegs, sir,
That years to come, if they get home,
They'll make their boasts and brags, sir.

1778

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wharfs and shipping, and discharged their small arms and cannons at everything they saw floating in the river during the ebb tide."—Hopkinson's note.

[2] Note the pronunciation of *keg*.

PATRICK HENRY

Born, Studley, Virginia, 1736, died, Red Hall, Virginia, 1799. Though unsuccessful in business, Henry rose quickly into prominence when at twenty-four he had entered upon the practice of law. He was a member of the Virginia legislature, early advised independence from Great Britain, and was a member of the Continental Congress, 1774. He was Governor of Virginia, 1776-1779, and 1784-1786. He refused office after 1791 and retired to the practice of law.

SPEECH IN THE VIRGINIA CONVENTION, 1775[1]

Mr. President:—

"No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as abilities, of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the house.[2] But different men often see the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen, if, entertaining as I do opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I shall speak forth my sentiments freely, and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the house is one of awful moment to this country. For my own part, I consider it as nothing less than a question of freedom or slavery. And in proportion to the magnitude of the subject ought to be the freedom of the debate. It is only in this way that we can hope to arrive at truth, and fulfill the great responsibility which we hold to God and our country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the Majesty of Heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of that siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those who having eyes see not, and having ears hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years, to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the house? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir: it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land.[3] Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love? Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation—the last arguments to which kings resort. I ask gentlemen, sir, What means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Great Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us: they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose to them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? What terms shall we find which have not been already exhausted? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer.

Sir, we have done everything that could be done to avert the storm which is now coming on. We have petitioned; we have remonstrated; we have supplicated; we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hands of the ministry and Parliament. Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned with contempt from the foot of the throne! In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free, if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending, if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained—we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!

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[1] This speech, delivered in the second Revolutionary Convention of Virginia, assembled March 20, 1775, supported the resolution which was being opposed by influential delegates, that the colony of Virginia "be immediately put into a posture of defense." Few Americans felt at this date that war was necessary or advisable. Patrick Henry had for months believed it to be inevitable.

When frequent reading or declamation of such a piece has made us deaf to its appeal, we should exert the imagination and read it as for the first time, calling up the circumstances that brought it forth. Such a fresh, unprejudiced attitude should reveal in this speech the terse brevity, the absence of turgid phrases, the fineness and elevation of spirit that belong to great oratory.

[2] The convention assembled.

[3] The Boston garrison was constantly being augmented, and war vessels were gathering in constantly increasing numbers in Boston harbor, the chief British naval rendezvous for North America.

They tell us, sir, that we are weak—unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations, and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election.[4] If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable—and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come!

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace—but there is no peace.[5] The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!

1775

THOMAS PAINE

Born in England, 1737, died, New York City, 1809. After having a common-school education, Paine went into business, and was afterwards appointed to the British excise service. He came to America in 1774, served as a volunteer under Washington, and was rewarded by Congress and the state of Pennsylvania for his services. He returned to Europe, was engaged in the French Revolution, reached America again in 1802 greatly reduced in circumstances, and a shattered man, regarded, moreover, as an atheist by the strict orthodox thinkers, because of his liberal religious views. Aside from some verse, Paine wrote *Common Sense,* 1776; *The Crisis* (periodical), 1776-1783; *The Rights of Man,* 1791; *The Age of Reason,* 1794.

From COMMON SENSE[1]

THOUGHTS ON THE PRESENT STATE OF THE AMERICAN AFFAIRS

In the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense; and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feelings to determine for themselves; that he will put on, or rather that he will not put off the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day.

Volumes have been written on the subject of the struggle between England and America. Men of all ranks have embarked in the controversy, from different motives, and with various designs: but all have been ineffectual, and the period of debate is closed. Arms, as the last resource, must decide the contest; the appeal was the choice of the king, and the continent hath accepted the challenge.

It has been reported of the late Mr. Pelham[2] (who, though an able minister was not without his faults) that on his being attacked in the house of commons, on the score that his measures were only of a temporary kind, replied, "they will last my time." Should a thought so fatal and unmanly possess the colonies in the present contest, the name of ancestors will be remembered by future generations with detestation.

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[4] choice

[5] *Jeremiah* vi. 14.

[1] Paine had been in the colonies scarcely two years when he wrote *Common Sense.* Although its tone is extreme and its arguments are not always sound, the appeal to the American populace was so direct and so easily understood that it made thousands of converts to American independence.

The sun never shone on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a city, a county, a province, or a kingdom, but of a continent —of at least one eighth part of the habitable globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seedtime of continental union, faith and honor. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound will enlarge with the tree, and posterity read it in full grown characters.

By referring the matter from argument to arms, a new area for politics is struck; a new method of thinking hath arisen. All plans, proposals, etc., prior to the nineteenth of April, i.e., to the commencement of hostilities, are like the almanacs of last year; which, though proper then, are superseded and useless now. Whatever was advanced by the advocates on either side of the question then, terminated in one and the same point, viz., a union with Great Britain; the only difference between the parties was the method of effecting it; the one proposing force, the other friendship; but it hath so far happened that the first has failed, and the second has withdrawn her influence.

As much hath been said of the advantages of reconciliation, which, like an agreeable dream, hath passed away and left us as we were, it is but right that we should examine the contrary side of the argument, and inquire into some of the many material injuries which these colonies sustain, and always will sustain, by being connected with and dependent on Great Britain. To examine that connection and dependence, on the principles of nature and common sense, to see what we have to trust to, if separated, and what we are to expect, if dependent.

I have heard it asserted by some, that as America has flourished under her former connection with Great Britain, the same connection is necessary towards her future happiness, and will always have the same effect. Nothing can be more fallacious than this kind of argument. We may as well assert that because a child has thrived upon milk, that it is never to have meat, or that the first twenty years of our lives is to become a precedent for the next twenty. But even this is admitting more than is true, for I answer roundly that America would have flourished as much, and probably much more, had no European power had anything to do with her. The articles of commerce by which she has enriched herself, are the necessaries of life, and will always have a market while eating is the custom of Europe.

But she has protected us, say some. That she hath engrossed us is true, and defended the continent at our expense as well as her own, is admitted, and she would have defended Turkey from the same motives, viz., for the sake of trade and dominion.

Alas! we have been long led away by ancient prejudices, and made large sacrifices to superstition. We have boasted the protection of Great Britain, without considering that her motive was interest not attachment; and that she did not protect us from our enemies on our account, but from her enemies on her own account, from those who had no quarrel with us on any other account, and who will always be our enemies on the same account. Let Britain waive her pretensions to the continent, or the continent throw off the dependence, and we should be at peace with France and Spain, were they at war with Britain. The miseries of Hanover's last war ought to warn us against connections.[3]

It hath lately been asserted in Parliament, that the colonies have no relation to each other but through the parent country, i.e., that Pennsylvania and the Jerseys, and so on for the rest, are sister colonies by the way of England; this is certainly a very roundabout way of proving relationship, but it is the nearest and only true way of proving enemyship, if I may so call it. France and Spain never were, nor perhaps ever will be, our enemies as Americans, but as our being the subjects of Great Britain.

But Britain is the parent country, say some. Then the more shame upon her conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families; wherefore, the assertion, if true, turns to her reproach; but it happens not to be true, or only partly so, and the phrase parent or mother country hath been jesuitically adopted by the King and his parasites, with a low papistical design of gaining an unfair bias on the credulous weakness of our minds. Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America. This new world hath been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from every part of Europe. Hither have they fled, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of the monster; and it is so far true of England, that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

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[2] Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle, 1693-1768, member of various English ministries.

[3] From 1714 to 1837 Hanover was ruled by the sovereigns of England (the House of Hanover). In 1756 George II. allied himself with Frederick the Great in the Seven Years' War. The next year, after the defeat of his son, the Duke of Cumberland, he gave Hanover to the French and made no attempt to recover it, though it was restored by the treaty of 1763.

In this extensive quarter of the globe, we forget the narrow limits of three hundred and sixty miles (the extent of England[4]) and carry our friendship on a larger scale; we claim brotherhood with every European Christian, and triumph in the generosity of the sentiment.

It is pleasant to observe by what regular gradations we surmount local prejudices, as we enlarge our acquaintance with the world. A man born in any town in England divided into parishes, will naturally associate most with his fellow parishioners (because their interests in many cases will be common) and distinguish him by the name of neighbor; if he meet him but a few miles from home, he drops the narrow idea of a street, and salutes him by the name of townsman; if he travel out of the county, and meets him in any other, he forgets the minor divisions of street and town, and calls him countryman, i.e., county-man; but if in their foreign excursions they should associate in France or any other part of Europe, their local remembrance would be enlarged into that of Englishmen. And by a just parity of reasoning, all Europeans meeting in America, or any other quarter of the globe, are countrymen; for England, Holland, Germany, or Sweden, when compared with the whole, stand in the same places on the larger scale, which the divisions of street, town, and county do on the smaller one; distinctions too limited for continental minds. Not one third of the inhabitants, even of this province, are of English descent.[5] Wherefore, I reprobate the phrase of parent or mother country applied to England only, as being false, selfish, narrow and ungenerous.

But, admitting that we were all of English descent, what does it amount to? Nothing. Britain, being now an open enemy, extinguishes every other name and title: and to say that reconciliation is our duty, is truly farcical. The first king of England, of the present line (William the Conqueror) was a Frenchman, and half the peers of England are descendents from the same country; wherefore, by the same method of reasoning, England ought to be governed by France.

Much hath been said of the united strength of Britain and the colonies, that in conjunction they might bid defiance to the world. But this is mere presumption; the fate of war is uncertain, neither do the expressions mean anything; for this continent would never suffer itself to be drained of inhabitants, to support the British arms in either Asia, Africa, or Europe.[6]

Besides, what have we to do with setting the world at defiance? Our plan is commerce, and that, well attended to, will secure us the peace and friendship of all Europe; because it is the interest of all Europe to have America a free port. Her trade will always be a protection, and her barrenness of gold and silver secure her from invaders.

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation, to show a single advantage that this continent can reap, by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge; not a single advantage is derived. Our corn will fetch its price in any market in Europe, and our imported goods must be paid for, buy them where we will.

But the injuries and disadvantages which we sustain by that connection, are without number; and our duty to mankind at large, as well as to ourselves, instructs us to renounce the alliance; because any submission to or dependence on Great Britain tends directly to involve this continent in European wars and quarrels; and sets us at variance with nations, who would otherwise seek our friendship, and against whom we have neither anger nor complaint. As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions, which she never can do, while, by her dependence on Britain, she is made the make-weight in the scale of British politics.

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[4] The distance from north to south of England proper.

[5] John Fiske says of *Common Sense:* "The pamphlet is full of scurrilous abuse of the English people, and resorts to such stupid arguments as the denial of the English origin of the Americans. Not one third of the people, *even* of Pennsylvania, are of English descent, argues Paine, as if Pennsylvania had been preëminent among the colonies for its English blood, and not, as in reality, perhaps the least English of all the thirteen save New York. But along with all this stuff there was a sensible and striking statement of the practical state of the case between England and the colonies. The reasons were shrewdly and vividly set forth for looking upon reconciliation as hopeless, and for seizing the present moment to declare to the world what the logic of events was already fast making an accomplished fact." *The American Revolution*, i. 174.

[6] The world war of 1914— shows Paine's forecast untrue, but we must remember that after our Revolution England took pains to endear to herself her remaining colonies.

Europe is too thickly planted with kingdoms to be long at peace, and whenever a war breaks out between England and any foreign power, the trade of America goes to ruin, because of her connection with Britain. The next war may not turn out like the last, and should it not, the advocates for reconciliation now will be wishing for separation then, because neutrality, in that case, would be a safer convoy than a man-of-war. Everything that is right or natural pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, "'Tis time to part." Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof that the authority of the one over the other was never the design of Heaven. The time likewise at which the continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled increases the force of it. The Reformation[7] was preceded by the discovery of America, as if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety.

The authority of Great Britain over this continent, is a form of government which sooner or later must have an end: and a serious mind can draw no true pleasure by looking forward, under the painful and positive conviction that what he calls "the present constitution," is merely temporary. As parents, we can have no joy, knowing that this government is not sufficiently lasting to insure anything which we may bequeathe to posterity; and by a plain method of argument, as we are running the next generation into debt, we ought to do the work of it; otherwise we use them meanly and pitifully. In order to discover the line of our duty rightly, we should take our children in our hand, and fix our station a few years farther into life; that eminence will present a prospect which a few present fears and prejudices conceal from our sight. . . .

It is repugnant to reason, and the universal order of things, to all examples from former ages, to suppose that this continent can longer remain subject to any external power. The most sanguine in Britain do not think so. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan short of separation, which can promise the continent even a year's security. Reconciliation is now a fallacious dream. Nature hath deserted the connection, and art cannot supply her place. For, as Milton wisely expresses, "never can true reconcilement grow, where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep."[8]

Every quiet method for peace hath been ineffectual. Our prayers have been rejected with disdain; and only tended to convince us that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in kings more than repeated petitioning—nothing hath contributed more than this very measure to make the kings of Europe absolute: witness Denmark and Sweden. Wherefore, since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake let us come to a final separation, and not leave the next generation to be cutting throats, under the violated unmeaning names of parent and child.

To say they will never attempt it again, is idle and visionary; we thought so at the repeal of the Stamp Act, yet a year or two undeceived us: as well may we suppose that nations which have been once defeated, will never renew the quarrel.

As to government matters, it is not in the power of Britain to do this continent justice: the business of it will soon be too weighty and intricate to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience by a power so distant from us, and so very ignorant of us; for if they cannot conquer us, they cannot govern us. To be always running three or four thousand miles with a tale or a petition, waiting four or five months for an answer, which, when obtained, requires five or six more to explain it in, will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness—there was a time when it was proper, and there is a proper time for it to cease.

Small islands, not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something absurd in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet; and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverses the common order of nature, it is evident that they belong to different systems: England to Europe—America to itself.

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[7] The movement in the sixteenth century against the authority of the Roman Catholic church.

[8] *Paradise Lost*, iv. 98.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment, to espouse the doctrine of separation and independence; I am clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this continent to be so; that everything short of that is mere patchwork; that it can afford no lasting felicity,—that it is leaving the sword to our children, and shrinking back at a time when going a little further would have rendered this continent the glory of the earth.

. . . .

A government of our own is our natural right: and when a man seriously reflects on the precariousness of human affairs, he will become convinced that it is infinitely wiser and safer to form a constitution of our own in a cool, deliberate manner, while we have it in our power, than to trust such an interesting event to time and chance. If we omit it now, some Masaniello[9] may hereafter arise, who, laying hold of popular disquietudes, may collect together the desperate and the discontented, and by assuming to themselves the powers of government, finally sweep away the liberties of the continent like a deluge. Should the government of America return again into the hands of Britain, the tottering situation of things will be a temptation for some desperate adventurer to try his fortune; and in such a case, what relief can Britain give? Ere she could hear the news, the fatal business might be done; and ourselves suffering like the wretched Britons under the oppression of the Conqueror. Ye that oppose independence now, ye know not what ye do; ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny, by keeping vacant the seat of government. There are thousands and tens of thousands who would think it glorious to expel from the continent that barbarous and hellish power which hath stirred up the Indians and negroes to destroy us[10]—the cruelty hath a double guilt: it is dealing brutally by us, and treacherously by them.

To talk of friendship with those in whom our reason forbids us to have faith, and our affections, wounded through a thousand pores, instruct us to detest, is madness and folly. Every day wears out the little remains of kindred between us and them; and can there be any reason to hope that as the relationship expires the affection will increase, or that we shall agree better when we have ten times more and greater concerns to quarrel over than ever?

Ye that tell us of harmony and reconciliation, can ye restore to us the time that is past? Can ye give to prostitution its former innocence? Neither can ye reconcile Britain and America. The last cord now is broken, the people of England are presenting addresses against us. There are injuries which nature cannot forgive; she would cease to be nature if she did. As well can the lover forgive the ravisher of his mistress, as the continent forgive the murders of Britain. The Almighty hath implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings, for good and wise purposes. They are the guardians of his image in our hearts, and distinguish us from the herd of common animals. The social compact would dissolve, and justice be extirpated from the earth, or have only a casual existence were we callous to the touches of affection. The robber and the murderer would often escape unpunished, did not the injuries which our tempers sustain provoke us into justice.

O! ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been haunted round the globe. Asia, and Africa, have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

1775 1776

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[9] Masaniello (Tomaso Aniello), 1622-1647, a Neapolitan fisherman, led a revolt against the Spanish viceroy of Naples which was successful in bringing relief from oppressive taxation.

[10] In the Revolution, Great Britain employed Indian tribes to attack and ravage outlying settlements. Some renegade negro slaves may also have been thus employed.

NATIONAL PERIOD

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Born, Westmoreland County, Virginia, 1732, died, Mount Vernon, 1799. Although the son of a well-to-do planter, Washington received but a meager schooling, mostly in mathematics and surveying. His services in the French and Indian War gave him excellent experience, especially in the discipline and organization of the British army. Afterwards he lived for ten years the life of a Virginia planter, modeled on that of the English country gentleman of the time, engaged in the rotation of crops, the improvement of stock, and the development of plantation industries. He was the wealthiest man in the colonies. In the Revolution he was the principal commander on the American side. After the Revolution, in which his estate suffered neglect, he resumed the life in which he most delighted. Soon, however, he was called to be president of the Constitutional Convention, and in 1789 to the Presidency. His administration was marked by violent political controversies sometimes engendered and always intensified by the French Revolution, then in progress. Washington's policy favored a strong central government free from European alliance.

FAREWELL ADDRESS

To the People of the United States[1]

September 17th, 1796.

Friends and Fellow-Citizens,

The period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country;—and that, in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but act under am supported by[2] a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn.[3] The strength of my inclination to do this previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety; and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion.[4] In the discharge of this trust I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

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[1] This is the most carefully written of all Washington's papers. Washington consulted Madison and Hamilton in its preparation, and to the latter is largely due the form, as a comparison of the formality of its style with the simplicity of that of Washington's other papers will show even without placing Hamilton's draft and the final form side by side.

[2] This should probably read "but am supported by" or "but act under and supported by." The text is from the copy in Washington's letter book.

[3] Washington was deeply sincere in his reluctance to hold office.

[4] Upon his first inauguration.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions agitated in every direction were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to the grave as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free Constitution which is the work of your hands may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States under the auspices of liberty may be made complete, by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption, of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsels. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.[5]

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence; the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity in every shape, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that from different causes, and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the Palladium[6] of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.[7]

[5] When he took farewell of the army.

[6] Safeguard: the image of Pallas, the Palladium, fell from heaven, and so long as it was preserved in the citadel, protected Troy from destruction.

[7] During the last days of the Confederation it seemed probable that New England would form a separate union. It is difficult today to comprehend the state of public opinion toward

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of AMERICAN, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

The North in an unrestrained intercourse[8] with the South, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation envigorated; and while it contributes in different ways to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water will more and more find, a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest, as one nation. Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power,[9] must be intrinsically precarious.

While, then, every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined in the united mass of means and efforts cannot fail to find greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighboring countries not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments which under any form of government are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is that your union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the UNION as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere?[10] Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper

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government in Washington's time. A spirit of intense democracy prevailed among the masses; but there was little recognition of the necessity that each individual give up some of his rights for the public good, there was no experience in more than local self-government, and there were few men aside from Washington and his immediate associates whose ideas comprehended the necessities of government of a nation as a unit, to say nothing of its relation to other nations. The marvel is that these few men held their own till a new generation with larger ideas than those of their fathers made the compact secure.

[8] After the Revolution and before the adoption of the Constitution, some of the states had enacted tariffs against others. Local commercial interests were leading to disruption.

[9] The United States government had failed for years to secure from Spain the right to navigate the Mississippi, a privilege indispensable to Tennessee and Kentucky. These communities, feeling deeply the neglect of their interests in the East, secretly intrigued with Spain and were with difficulty kept within the union.

[10] Much as Washington strove for power in the central government, he could scarcely have foreseen the scope of the central government of today, with an oversight not merely regulative, but also scientific and industrial.

organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations, Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head; they have seen, in the negotiation by the executive and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain,[11] and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the General Government and in the Atlantic States unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi; they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain[12] and that with Spain, which secure to them everything they could desire in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the Union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay,[13] by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This Government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations,[14] under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party;[15] often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community, and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests. However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things, to become potent engines by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

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[11] Signed at Madrid, October, 1795, and allowing the free navigation of the Mississippi.

[12] Jay's famous treaty with England brought about, in June, 1796, the surrender of the remaining posts of the British in the Northwest which until this time had controlled Indian trade and Indian policy toward the settlers there.

[13] The Articles of Confederation.

[14] Clubs of citizens framed on the model of the Jacobin Club of Paris had been formed throughout the country to propagate the ideas of the French Revolution and to express sympathy with France in her struggle with the nations of Europe allied against her.

[15] Notwithstanding Washington's strong feeling, party had already gained permanent foothold in the country.

Towards the preservation of your Government and the permanency of your present happy state it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the Constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments, as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes, upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight), the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foments occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the doors to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.[16]

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This within certain limits is probably true; and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence if not with favor upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be by force of public opinion to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power and proneness to abuse it which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own eyes.[17] To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If in the opinion of the people the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

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[16] War had almost been thrust upon the country through the imprudence of Genet, minister from France, who appealed through the press directly to the party in America favoring alliance with his country.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened.

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should coöperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.[18]

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people

[17] The proper division of the government into legislative, executive, and judicial departments, so that one should not encroach upon another, had been a most difficult task.

[18] The "Whisky Rebellion" of 1794 was an insurrection caused by a tax levied by Congress.

always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that in the course of time and things the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred or an habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed and bloody contests. The nation prompted by ill-will and resentment sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations has been the victim.

So likewise a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation), facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens, the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favorite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest guided by our justice shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world; so far I mean as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves by suitable establishments on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them, conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you, and to the world. To myself the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe,[19] my proclamation of the 22d of April 1793 is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice and by that of your representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take and was bound in duty and interest to take a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe that, according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers has been virtually admitted by all.

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[19] The war between France and the nations of Europe ending with Napoleon in control of France. Washington's proclamation of neutrality was a severe blow to those in America who sympathized with France.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize without alloy the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow-citizens the benign influence of good laws under a free government, the ever favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors, and dangers.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

United States, September 19th, 1796.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Born at Shadwell, Albemarle County, Virginia, 1743, died at Monticello, Virginia, 1826. Jefferson had good classical schooling, was two years at William and Mary College, studied and practiced law, and early entered public life in the Virginia legislature. He was member of the Continental Congress, governor of Virginia, 1779-81, United States minister to France, 1785-1789, vice president under Adams, and President, 1801-1809. Jefferson's political faith rested in the people as a directly active governing force, a faith opposed to that of Washington, who placed greater reliance in a strong central government. His writings are nearly all political, though his intellectual interests were of great range.

From his AUTOBIOGRAPHY[1]

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[*Congress under the Confederation*[2]]

Our body was little numerous but very contentious. Day after day was wasted on the most unimportant questions. My colleague Mercer was one of those afflicted with the morbid rage of debate, of an ardent mind, prompt imagination, and copious flow of words; he heard with impatience any logic which was not his own. Sitting near me on some occasion of a trifling but wordy debate, he asked how I could sit in silence hearing so much false reasoning which a word should refute. I observed to him that to refute indeed was easy, but to silence impossible. That in measures brought forward by myself I took the laboring oar, as was incumbent on me; but that in general I was willing to listen. If every sound argument or objection was used by some one or other of the numerous debaters it was enough: if not, I thought it sufficient to suggest the omission without going into a repetition of what had been already said by others. That this was a waste and abuse of the time and patience of the house which could not be justified. And I believe that if the members of deliberative bodies were to observe this course generally, they would do in a day what takes them a week; and it is really more questionable than may at first be thought whether Bonaparte's dumb legislature[3] which said nothing and did much may not be preferable to one which talks much and does nothing. I served with General Washington in the legislature of Virginia before the Revolution, and during it with Dr. Franklin in Congress. I never heard either of them speak ten minutes at a time, nor to any but the main point which was to decide the question. They laid their shoulders to the great points, knowing that the little ones would follow of themselves. If the present Congress errs in too much talking, how can it be otherwise in a body to which the people send one hundred and fifty lawyers whose trade it is to question everything, yield nothing, and talk by the hour? That one hundred and fifty lawyers should do business together ought not to be expected. But to return again to our subject.

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[1] The autobiography is a condensed narrative written when Jefferson was seventy-seven years of age, and comes down only to the death of Franklin in 1790.

[2] The Congress under the articles of Confederation, session of 1784.

[3] When Bonaparte obtained control of France the national assembly voted without debate the decrees he proposed.

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[*The French Revolution*[4]]

[July 12, 1789] The King[5] was now completely in the hands of men[6] the principal among whom had been noted through their lives for the Turkish despotism of their characters, and who were associated around the King as proper instruments for what was to be executed. The news of this change began to be known at Paris about one or two o'clock. In the afternoon a body of about one hundred German cavalry[7] were advanced and drawn up in the Place Louis XV. and about two hundred Swiss posted at a little distance in their rear. This drew people to the spot, who thus accidentally found themselves in front of the troops, merely at first as spectators; but as their numbers increased their indignation rose. They retired a few steps and posted themselves on and behind large piles of stones, large and small, collected in that Place for a bridge which was to be built adjacent to it. In this position, happening to be in my carriage on a visit, I passed through the lane they had formed, without interruption. But the moment after I had passed, the people attacked the cavalry with stones. They charged, but the advantageous position of the people, and the showers of stones, obliged the horse to retire and quit the field altogether, leaving one of their number on the ground, and the Swiss in their rear not moving to their aid. This was the signal for universal insurrection, and this body of cavalry, to avoid being massacred, retired towards Versailles.[8] The people now armed themselves with such weapons as they could find in armorers' shops and private houses, and with bludgeons, and were roaming all night through all parts of the city, without any decided object. The next day (13th.) the Assembly pressed on the King to send away the troops, to permit the *bourgeoisie*[9] of Paris to arm for the preservation of order in the city, and offered to send a deputation from their body to tranquilize them; but their propositions were refused. A committee of magistrates and electors of the city are appointed by those bodies to take upon them its government. The people now openly joined by the French guards force the prison of St. Lazare, release all the prisoners, and take a great store of corn, which they carry to the Corn-market.[10] Here they get some arms, and the French guards[11] begin to form and train them. The City-committee determined to raise forty-eight thousand *bourgeoise,* or rather to restrain their numbers to forty-eight thousand. On the 14th. they send one of their members (Mons. de Corny) to the Hôtel des Invalides,[12] to ask arms for their Garde-Bourgeoise.[13] He was followed by, and he found there a great collection of people. The Governor of the Invalides came out and represented the impossibility of his delivering arms without the orders of those from whom he received them. De Corny advised the people then to retire, and retired himself; but the people took possession of the arms. It was remarkable that not only the Invalides themselves made no opposition, but that a body of five thousand foreign troops within four hundred yards never stirred. M. de Corny and five others were then sent to ask arms of M. de Launay, governor of the Bastile.[14] They found a great collection of people already before the place, and they immediately planted a flag of truce, which was answered by a like flag hoisted on the parapet. The deputation prevailed on the people to fall back a little, advanced themselves to make their demand of the Governor, and in that instant a discharge from the Bastile killed four persons, of those nearest to the deputies. The deputies retired. I happened to be at the house of M. de Corny when he returned to it, and received from him a narrative of these transactions. On the retirement of the deputies, the people rushed forward and almost in an instant were in possession of a fortification defended by one hundred men, of infinite strength, which in other times had stood several regular sieges, and had never been taken. How they forced their entrance has never been explained.[15] They took all the arms, discharged the prisoners, and such of the garrison as were not killed in the first moment of fury, carried the Governor and Lt. Governor to the Place de Grève (the place of public execution) cut off their heads, and sent them through the city in triumph to the Palais Royal.[16] About the same instant a treacherous correspondence having been discovered in M. de Flesselles, Prévôt des Marchands,[17] they seized him in the Hôtel de Ville where he was in the execution of his office, and cut off his head. These events carried imperfectly to Versailles were the subject of two successive deputations from the Assembly to the King, to both of which he gave dry and hard answers, for nobody had as yet been permitted to inform him truly and fully of what had passed at Paris. But at night the Duke de Liancourt forced his way into the King's bed chamber and obliged him to hear a full and animated detail of the disasters of the day in Paris. He went to bed fearfully impressed. The decapitation of de Launay worked powerfully through the night on the whole aristocratic party insomuch that in the morning those of the greatest influence on the Count d'Artois[18] represented to him the absolute necessity that the King should give up everything to the Assembly. This according with the dispositions of the King, he went about eleven o'clock, accompanied only by his brothers, to the Assembly and there read to them a speech in which he asked their interposition to reëstablish order. Although couched in terms of some caution yet the manner in which it was delivered made it evident that it was meant as a surrender at discretion. He returned to the Chateau[19] afoot accompanied by the Assembly. They sent off a deputation to quiet Paris, at the head of which was the Marquis de la Fayette who had the same morning been named Commandant en chef of the Milice Bourgeoise, and Mons. Bailly, former President of the States General,[20] was called for as Prevot des Marchands. The demolition of the Bastile was now ordered and begun. A body of the Swiss guards of the regiment of Ventimille, and the city horse guards joined the people. The alarm at Versailles increased. The foreign troops were ordered off instantly. Every minister resigned. The King confirmed Bailly as Prévôt des Marchands, wrote to Mr. Necker to recall him, sent his letter open to the Assembly to be forwarded by them, and invited them to go with him to Paris the next day to satisfy the city of his dispositions; and that night, and the next morning the Count d'Artois and M. de Montesson, a deputy connected with him, Madame de Polignac, Madame de Guiche, and the Count de Vaudreuil, favorites of the Queen, the Abbé de Vermont her confessor, the Prince of Condé and Duke of Bourbon[21] fled. The King came to Paris, leaving the Queen in consternation for his return. Omitting the less important figures of the procession, the King's carriage was in the center, on each side of it the Assembly in two ranks afoot, at their head the M. de la Fayette as Commander-in-chief on horseback, and Bourgeoise guards before and behind. About sixty thousand citizens of all forms and conditions, armed with the muskets of the Bastile and Invalides, as far as they would go, the rest with pistols, swords, pikes, pruning hooks, scythes etc. lined all the streets through which the procession passed, and with the crowds of people in the streets, doors and windows, saluted them everywhere with cries of *"Vive la nation,"* but not a single *"Vive le roy"* was heard. The King landed at the Hôtel de Ville. There M. Bailly presented and put into his hat the popular cockade,[22] and addressed him. The King being unprepared and unable to answer, Bailly went to him, gathered from him some scraps of sentences, and made out an answer, which he delivered to the audience as from the King. On their return the popular cries were *"Vive le roy et la nation."* He was conducted by a *garde bourgeoise* to his palace at Versailles, and thus concluded an *amende honorable* as no sovereign ever made, and no people ever received.

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[4] Jefferson was minister to France, 1785-1789, and, as may be inferred from his account, strongly sympathized with the revolution there.

[5] Louis XVI.

[6] The newly formed reactionary ministry appointed at the dismissal of Necker, whom the people trusted.

[7] The king, distrusting French troops, had surrounded himself with mercenaries.

[8] Royal residence and military headquarters ten miles from Paris.

[9] the middle classes.

[10] The people were starving.

[11] The Gardes Françaises, native French soldiers, sympathized with the revolutionists.

[12] Originally a home for disabled soldiers. Arms were stored there.

[13] Citizen-guard, forming at first a kind of city militia.

[14] An ancient fortress, then used like the Tower of London, as the state prison: the visible sign of tyranny.

And here again was lost another precious occasion of sparing to France the crimes and cruelties through which she has since passed, and to Europe, and finally America the evils which flowed on them also from this mortal source. The King was now become a passive machine in the hands of the National Assembly, and had he been left to himself, he would have willingly acquiesced in whatever they should devise as best for the nation. A wise constitution would have been formed, hereditary in his line, himself placed at its head, with powers so large as to enable him to do all the good of his station, and so limited as to restrain him from its abuse. This he would have faithfully administered, and more than this I do not believe he ever wished. But he had a Queen of absolute sway over his weak mind, and timid virtue; and of a character the reverse of his in all points. This angel, as gaudily painted in the rhapsodies of the Rhetor Burke,[23] with some smartness of fancy but no sound sense, was proud, disdainful of restraint, indignant at all obstacles to her will, eager in the pursuit of pleasure, and firm enough to hold to her desires or perish in their wreck. Her inordinate gambling and dissipations, with those of the Count d'Artois and others of her clique, had been a sensible item in the exhaustion of the treasury, which called into action the reforming hand of the nation; and her opposition to it, her inflexible perverseness, and dauntless spirit, led herself to the guillotine, and drew the King on with her, and plunged the world into crimes and calamities which will forever stain the pages of modern history. I have ever believed that had there been no Queen, there would have been no revolution. No force would have been provoked nor exercised. The King would have gone hand in hand with the wisdom of his sounder counselors, who, guided by the increased lights of the age, wished only, with the same pace, to advance the principles of their social institution. The deed which closed the mortal course of these sovereigns, I shall neither approve nor condemn. I am not prepared to say that the first magistrate of a nation cannot commit treason against his country, or is unamenable to its punishment: nor yet that where there is no written law, no regulated tribunal, there is not a law in our hearts, and a power in our hands, given for righteous employment in maintaining right, and redressing wrong. Of those who judged the King, many thought him wilfully criminal, many that his existence would keep the nation in perpetual conflict with the horde of kings who would war against a regeneration which might come home to themselves, and that it were better that one should die than all. I should not have voted with this portion of the legislature. I should have shut up the Queen in a convent, putting harm out of her power, and placed the King in his station, investing him with limited powers, which I verily believe he would have honestly exercised, according to the measure of his understanding. In this way no void would have been created, courting the usurpation of a military adventurer, nor occasion given for those enormities which demoralized the nations of the world, and destroyed, and is yet to destroy millions and millions of its inhabitants. There are three epochs in history signalized by the total extinction of national morality. The first was of the successors of Alexander, not omitting himself. The next the successors of the first Caesar, the third our own age. This was begun by the partition of Poland,[24] followed by that of the treaty of Pilnitz,[25] next the conflagration of Copenhagen;[26] then the enormities of Bonaparte partitioning the earth at his will, and devastating it with fire and sword; now the conspiracy of kings, the successors of Bonaparte, blasphemously calling themselves the Holy Alliance,[27] and treading in the footsteps of their incarcerated leader,[28] not yet indeed usurping the government of other nations avowedly and in detail, but controlling by their armies the forms in which they will permit them to be governed; and reserving *in petto*[29] the order and extent of the usurpations further meditated. But I will return from a digression, anticipated too in time, into which I have been led by reflection on the criminal passions which refused to the world a favorable occasion of saving it from the afflictions it has since suffered.

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[15] Compare this matter-of-fact account with that of Carlyle's *French Revolution,* I. v. 6.

[16] Residence of the Duc d'Orléans, Louis Philippe, "Egalité," representative of one branch of the Bourbon family, who at first sided with the revolutionists but later fell a victim to the Jacobins.

[17] The chief city official.

[18] Brother of Louis XVI.; king as Charles X., 1824-1830.

[19] The royal residence at Versailles. The new national Assembly was in session near at hand.

[20] The national legislature before the revolution.

[21] Father and son, representing the Condé branch of the Bourbon family.

[22] The tri-colored rosette, the emblem of the Revolution.

1821 1829

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[23] The student should by all means compare Jefferson's view with that of Edmund Burke in the *Reflections on the Revolution in France.* Jefferson feels that Burke was in this case more a rhetorician than historian.

[24] In 1772 between Russia, Austria, and Prussia.

[25] By which the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia agreed, in 1792, to support in arms the cause of the French king.

[26] The victory of Nelson over the Danes in 1801, and the bombardment and partial destruction of Copenhagen in 1807, marked the ruthless driving of Denmark by the allies from a position of neutrality in the great European struggle.

[27] A compact formed by the sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia in 1815, and joined later by nearly all the monarchs of Europe, for the avowed purpose of perpetuating the Christian religion, but really to perpetuate their own respective dynasties.

[28] Bonaparte, exiled to St. Helena.

[29] in the breast

FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

March 4, 1801[1]

Friends and Fellow-Citizens:—

Called upon to undertake the duties of the first executive office of our country, I avail myself of the presence of that portion of my fellow-citizens which is here assembled, to express my grateful thanks for the favor with which they have been pleased to look towards me, to declare a sincere consciousness that the task is above my talents, and that I approach it with those anxious and awful presentiments which the greatness of the charge and the weakness of my powers so justly inspire. A rising nation spread over a wide and fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich productions of their industry, engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye; when I contemplate these transcendent objects, and see the honor, the happiness, and the hopes of this beloved country committed to the issue and the auspices of this day, I shrink from the contemplation, and humble myself before the magnitude of the undertaking.

Utterly, indeed, should I despair, did not the presence of many whom I here see remind me that in the other high authorities provided by our constitution I shall find resources of wisdom, of virtue, and of zeal on which to rely under all difficulties. To you then, gentlemen, who are charged with the sovereign functions of legislation, and to those associated with you, I look with encouragement for that guidance and support which may enable us to steer with safety the vessel in which we are all embarked, amidst the conflicting elements of a troubled sea.[2]

During the contest of opinion through which we have passed, the animation of discussions and of exertions has sometimes worn an aspect which might impose on strangers unused to think freely and to speak and to write what they think. But this being now decided by the voice of the nation, announced according to the rules of the Constitution, all will, of course, arrange themselves under the will of the law, and unite in common efforts for the common good. All too will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect, and to violate would be oppression. Let us then, fellow-citizens, unite with one heart and one mind; let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without which liberty, and even life itself, are but dreary things. And let us reflect that having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of as bitter and bloody persecutions. During the throes and convulsions of the ancient world, during the agonizing spasms of infuriated man, seeking through blood and slaughter his long-lost liberty, it was not wonderful that the agitation of the billows should reach even this distant and peaceful shore; that this should be more felt and feared by some and less by others; and should divide opinions as to measures of safety. But every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all Republicans; we are all Federalists.[3] If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union, or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated, where reason is left free to combat it. I know, indeed, that some honest men have feared that a republican government cannot be strong; that this Government is not strong enough. But would the honest patriot, in the full tide of successful experiment, abandon a government which has so far kept us free and firm, on the theoretic and visionary fear that this Government, the world's best hope, may by possibility want energy to preserve itself? I trust not. I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest government on earth. I believe it the only one where every man, at the call of the law would fly to the standard of the law; would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he then, be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the form of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question.

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[1] Jefferson took the presidency as a Republican, or liberal, after the Federalists or conservatives, had been in office for the first twelve years under the Constitution. His inaugural address is frequently entitled "Democracy Defined."

[2] Jefferson wrote it: "I look wth encorgm^{t} for y^{t} guid^{ce} & supp^{rt} w^{ch} m enable us to steer wth safety ye vess^{l} in w^{ch} w'r all mb^{kd} am^{dst} y^{e} confl^{cts} elem^{ts} of a troubl^{d} sea."

[3] Jefferson's tact, and his moderation as President, gradually softened the prejudice of the great minority opposed to his theoretical principles.

Let us then, pursue with courage and confidence our own federal and republican principles, our attachment to union and representative government. Kindly separated by nature and a wide ocean from the exterminating havoc of one quarter of the globe; too high-minded to endure the degradations of the others; possessing a chosen country, with room enough for our descendants to the hundredth and thousandth generation; entertaining a due sense of our equal right to the use of our own faculties, to the acquisitions of our own industry, to honor and confidence from our fellow-citizens, resulting not from birth, but from our actions and their sense of them; enlightened by a benign religion, professed indeed and practiced in various forms yet all of them inculcating honesty, truth, temperance, gratitude, and the love of man, acknowledging and adoring an overruling Providence, which by all its dispensations proves that it delights in the happiness of man here and his greater happiness hereafter: with all these blessings, what more is necessary to make us a happy and a prosperous people? Still one thing more, fellow-citizens—a wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government; and this is necessary to close the circle of our felicities.

About to enter, fellow-citizens, on the exercise of duties which comprehend everything dear and valuable to you, it is proper you should understand what I deem the essential principle of this government, and consequently those which ought to shape its administration. I will compress them in the narrowest compass they will bear, stating the general principle but not all its limitations. Equal and exact justice to all men of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none;[4] the support of the state governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns, and the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies; the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet-anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people; a mild and safe corrective of abuses which are lopped by the sword of revolution, where peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of republics, from which is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority—economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts, and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as its handmaid; the diffusion of information and arraignment of all abuses at the bar of the public reason; freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of person, under the protection of the habeas corpus; and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us, and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages and blood of our heroes have been devoted to their attainment; they should be the creed of our political faith; the text of civic instruction; the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them in moments of error or alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.

I repair then, fellow-citizens, to the post which you have assigned me. With experience enough in subordinate stations to know the difficulties of this, the greatest of all, I have learned to expect that it will rarely fall to the lot of imperfect man to retire from this station with the reputation and the favor which bring him into it. Without pretentions to that high confidence you reposed in our first and greatest revolutionary character, whose preëminent services had entitled him to the first place in his country's love, and had destined for him the fairest page in the volume of faithful history, I ask so much confidence only as may give firmness and effect to the legal administration of your affairs. I shall often go wrong through defect of judgment. When right, I shall often be thought wrong by those whose positions will not command a view of the whole ground. I ask your indulgence for my own errors, which will never be intentional; and your support against the errors of others, who may condemn what they would not, if seen in all its parts. The approbation implied by your suffrage is a great consolation to me for the past; and my future solicitude will be to retain the good opinion of those who have bestowed it in advance, to conciliate that of others by doing them all the good in my power, and to be instrumental to the happiness and freedom of all.

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[4] Cf. Washington's words, p. 167.

Relying then on the patronage of your good-will, I advance with obedience to the work, ready to retire from it whenever you become sensible how much better choice it is in your power to make. And may that Infinite Power which rules the destinies of the universe lead our councils to what is best, and give them a favorable issue for your peace and prosperity.

1801 1801

PHILIP FRENEAU

Born, New York City, 1752, died, Monmouth, New Jersey, 1832. Freneau was of French descent, was graduated from Princeton College in 1771, after 1776 was often at sea between Philadelphia and the West Indies, and in 1780 was captured by the British and confined for a time in a prison ship. He was the first important American poet, and wrote during the Revolution many patriotic lyrics and satires. He was connected with several newspapers in New York and Philadelphia, and in 1790 was translator for the Department of State. He published volumes of poetry from 1786 to 1815, notably an edition from his own press at Monmouth, 1795.

From THE HOUSE OF NIGHT[1]

A Vision

Trembling I write my dream, and recollect
A fearful vision at the midnight hour;
So late, Death o'er me spread his sable
wings,
Painted with fancies of malignant power!
Such was the dream the sage Chaldean saw
Disclosed to him that felt heaven's vengeful rod,
Such was the ghost, who through deep
silence cried,
Shall mortal man—be juster than his God?[2]

Let others draw from smiling skies their
theme,
And tell of climes that boast unfading light,
I draw a darker scene, replete with gloom,
I sing the horrors of the House of Night.

Stranger, believe the truth experience tells,
Poetic dreams are of a finer cast
Than those which o'er the sober brain diffused,
Are but a repetition of some action past.

Fancy, I own thy power—when sunk in
sleep
Thou play'st thy wild delusive part so well
You lift me into immortality,
Depict new heavens, or draw the scenes of
hell.

By some sad means, when reason holds no
sway,
Lonely I roved at midnight o'er a plain
Where murmuring streams and mingling
rivers flow
Far to their springs, or seek the sea again.

Sweet vernal May! though then thy woods
in bloom

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[1] Some of Freneau's shorter pieces have a finish and a harmony between thought and form worthy of all praise. *The House of Night*, longer and more pretentious, lacks these qualities but it shows genuine power of original imagination, and some passages are gorgeous beyond anything previous in American literature. The poem is uneven and in places crude; but we must remember that it was written when standards in American literature were not yet formed. It also shows the lack of stimulating and sympathetic criticism that would greatly have benefited the most of Freneau's work.

In explaining the poem Freneau says:

Advertisement—This Poem is founded upon the authority of Scripture, inasmuch as these sacred books assert that "the last enemy that shall be conquered is Death." For the purposes of poetry he is here personified, and represented as on his dying bed. The scene is laid at a solitary palace (the time midnight), which, tho' before beautiful and joyous, is now become sad and gloomy, as being the abode and receptacle of Death. Its owner, an amiable, majestic youth, who had lately lost a beloved consort, nevertheless with a noble philosophical fortitude and humanity, entertains him in a friendly manner, and by employing Physicians, endeavors to restore him to health, altho' an enemy; convinced of the excellence and propriety of that divine precept, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." He nevertheless, as if by a spirit of prophecy, informs this (fictitiously) wicked being of the certainty of his doom, and represents to him in a pathetic manner, the vanity of his expectations, either of a reception into the abodes of the just, or continuing longer to make havock of mankind upon earth. The patient finding his end approaching, composes his epitaph, and orders it to be engraved on his tombstone, hinting to us thereby that even Death and Distress have vanity; and would be remembered with honour after he is no more, altho' his whole life has been spent in deeds of devastation and murder. He dies at last in the utmost agonies of despair, after agreeing with an avaricious Undertaker to intomb his bones. This reflects upon the inhumanity of those men, who, not to mention an enemy, would scarcely cover a departed friend with a little dust, without certainty of reward for so doing. The circumstances of his funeral are then recited, and the visionary and fabulous part of the poem disappears. It concludes with a few reflexions on the impropriety of a too great attachment to the present life, and incentives to such moral virtue as may assist in conducting us to a better.

[2] Eliphaz told Job what he had seen and heard in a vision,—of a spirit that said, "Shall mortal man be more just than God?" *Job* iv. 17.

Flourished, yet nought of this could fancy see,
No wild pinks blessed the meads, no green the fields,
And naked seemed to stand each lifeless tree:

Dark was the sky, and not one friendly star
Shone from the zenith or horizon, clear,
Mist sat upon the woods, and darkness rode
In her black chariot, with a wild career.

And from the woods the late resounding note
Issued of the loquacious whippoorwill,
Hoarse, howling dogs, and nightly roving wolves
Clamored from far-off cliffs invisible.

Rude, from the wide extended Chesapeake
I heard the winds the dashing waves assail,
And saw from far, by picturing fancy formed,
The black ship traveling through the noisy gale.

At last, by chance and guardian fancy led,
I reached a noble dome,[3] raised fair and high,
And saw the light from upper windows flame,
Presage of mirth and hospitality.

And by that light around the dome appeared
A mournful garden of autumnal hue,
Its lately pleasing flowers all drooping stood
Amidst high weeds that in rank plenty grew.

The primrose there, the violet darkly blue,
Daisies and fair narcissus ceased to rise,
Gay spotted pinks their charming bloom withdrew,
And polyanthus quenched its thousand dyes.

No pleasant fruit or blossom gaily smiled,
Nought but unhappy plants or trees were seen,
The yew, the myrtle, and the church-yard elm,
The cypress, with its melancholy green.[4]

There cedars dark, the osier, and the pine;
Shorn tamarisks, and weeping willows grew.
The poplar tall, the lotus, and the lime,
And pyracantha did her leaves renew.

The poppy there, companion to repose,
Displayed her blossoms that began to fall,
And here the purple amaranthus rose
With mint strong-scented, for the funeral.

And here and there with laurel shrubs between
A tombstone lay, inscribed with strains of woe,
And stanzas sad, throughout the dismal green,
Lamented for the dead that slept below.[5]

. . . .

Then up three winding stairs my feet were brought
To a high chamber, hung with mourning sad;
The unsnuffed candles glared with visage dim,
'Midst grief, in ecstasy of woe run mad.

A wide leafed table stood on either side,
Well fraught with phials, half their liquids spent,
And from a couch, behind the curtain's veil,
I heard a hollow voice of loud lament.

Turning to view the object whence it came,
My frighted eyes a horrid form surveyed;
Fancy, I own thy power—Death on the couch,
With fleshless limbs, at rueful length, was laid.

And o'er his head flew jealousies and cares,
Ghosts, imps, and half the black Tartarian[6] crew,
Archangels damned, nor was their Prince remote,
Borne on the vaporous wings of Stygian[7] dew.

Around his bed, by the dull flambeaux' glare,
I saw pale phantoms—rage to madness vexed,
Wan, wasting grief, and ever musing care,
Distressful pain, and poverty perplexed.

Sad was his countenance, if we can call
That countenance, where only bones were seen

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[3] The home of the "majestic youth" spoken of in the "advertisement."

[4] Characteristic eighteenth century graveyard sylva.

[5] There follows the consultation of Death's physicians.

[6] Pertaining to Tartarus, the abode of the wicked in Hades.

[7] Styx was one of the rivers of the lower world.

And eyes sunk in their sockets, dark and low,
And teeth, that only showed themselves to grin.

Reft was his skull of hair, and no fresh bloom
Of cheerful mirth sat on his visage hoar:
Sometimes he raised his head, while deep-drawn groans
Were mixed with words that did his fate deplore.

Oft did he wish to see the daylight spring,
And often toward the window leaned to hear,
Fore-runner of the scarlet-mantled morn,
The early note of wakeful chanticleer.[8]

. . . .

"Death in this tomb his weary bones hath laid,
"Sick of dominion o'er the human kind—
"Behold what devastations he hath made,
"Survey the millions by his arm confined.

"Six thousand years[9] *has sovereign sway been mine,*
"None, but myself, can real glory claim;
"Great Regent of the world I reigned alone,
"And princes trembled when my mandate came.

"Vast and unmatched throughout the world, my fame
"Takes place of gods, and asks no mortal date—[10]
"No; by myself, and by the heavens, I swear,
"Not Alexander's name is half so great.

"Nor swords nor darts my prowess could withstand,
"All quit their arms, and bowed to my decree,
"Even mighty Julius died beneath my hand,
"For slaves and Caesars were the same to me!

"Traveler, wouldst thou his noblest trophies seek,
"Search in no narrow spot obscure for those;
"The sea profound, the surface of all land
"Is molded with the myriads of his foes."

Scarce had he spoke, when on the lofty dome
Rushed from the clouds a hoarse resounding blast—
Round the four eaves so loud and sad it played
As though all music were to breathe its last.

Warm was the gale, and such as travelers say
Sport with the winds on Zaara's[11] barren waste;
Black was the sky, a mourning carpet spread,
Its azure blotted, and its stars o'ercast!

Lights in the air like burning stars were hurled,
Dogs howled, heaven muttered, and the tempest blew,
The red half-moon peeped from behind a cloud
As if in dread the amazing scene to view.

The mournful trees that in the garden stood
Bent to the tempest as it rushed along,
The elm, the myrtle, and the cypress sad
More melancholy tuned its bellowing song.

No more that elm its noble branches spread,
The yew, the cypress, or the myrtle tree,
Rent from the roots the tempest tore them down,
And all the grove in wild confusion lay.

Yet, mindful of his dread command I part
Glad from the magic dome—nor found relief;
Damps from the dead hung heavier round my heart,
While sad remembrance roused her stores of grief.

O'er a dark field I held my dubious way
Where Jack-a-lanthorn walked his lonely round,
Beneath my feet substantial darkness lay,
And screams were heard from the distempered ground.

Nor looked I back, till to a far-off wood,
Trembling with fear, my weary feet had sped—

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[8] There follow a description of the mortal sickness and agony of Death, and the directions he gives for his burial, ending with his epitaph in lines 389 ff.

[9] According to Jewish chronology, the creation and fall of man, and with it the beginning of the reign of death, took place four thousand years before the Christian era.

[10] Death can scarcely conceive that he is not immortal, dateless, like the gods.

[11] Sahara's

Dark was the night, but at the enchanted dome
I saw the infernal windows flaming red.

And from within the howls of Death I heard,
Cursing the dismal night that gave him birth,
Damning his ancient sire, and mother sin,
Who at the gates of hell, accursed, brought him forth.[12]

For fancy gave to my enraptured soul
An eagle's eye, with keenest glance to see,
And bade those distant sounds distinctly roll,
Which, waking, never had affected me.

Oft his pale breast with cruel hand he smote,
And tearing from his limbs a winding sheet,
Roared to the black skies, while the woods around
As wicked as himself, his words repeat.

Thrice toward the skies his meager arms he reared,
Invoked all hell, and thunders on his head,
Bid lightnings fly, earth yawn, and tempests roar,
And the sea wrap him in its oozy bed.

"My life for one cool draught!—O, fetch your springs,
Can one unfeeling to my woes be found!
No friendly visage comes to my relief,
But ghosts impend, and specters hover round.

"Though humbled now, disheartened and distressed,
Yet when admitted to the peaceful ground,
With heroes, kings, and conquerors I shall rest,
Shall sleep as safely, and perhaps as sound."

Dim burnt the lamp, and now the phantom Death
Gave his last groans in horror and despair—
"All hell demands me hence,"—he said, and threw
The red lamp hissing through the midnight air.

Trembling, across the plain my course I held,
And found the graveyard, loitering through the gloom,
And, in the midst, a hell-red, wandering light,
Walking in fiery circles round the tomb.

Among the graves a spiry building stood,
Whose tolling bell, resounding through the shade,
Sung doleful ditties to the adjacent wood,
And many a dismal drowsy thing it said.

This fabric tall, with towers and chancels graced,
Was raised by sinners' hands in ages fled;
The roof they painted, and the beams they braced,
And texts from scripture o'er the walls they spread:

But wicked were their hearts, for they refused
To aid the helpless orphan, when distressed,
The shivering, naked stranger they misused,
And banished from their doors the starving guest.

By laws protected, cruel and profane,
The poor man's ox these monsters drove away;—
And left Distress to attend her infant train,
No friend to comfort, and no bread to stay.

But Heaven looked on with keen, resentful eye,
And doomed them to perdition and the grave,
That as they felt not for the wretch distressed,
So Heaven no pity on their souls would have.

In pride they raised this building tall and fair,
Their hearts were on perpetual mischief bent,
With pride they preached, and pride was in their prayer,
With pride they were deceived, and so to hell they went.

At distance far approaching to the tomb,
By lamps and lanthorns guided through the shade,
A coal-black chariot hurried through the gloom,
Specters attending, in black weeds arrayed,

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[12] Cf. *Paradise Lost*, ii. 749-790.

Whose woeful forms yet chill my soul with dread,
Each wore a vest in Stygian chambers wove,
Death's kindred all—Death's horses they bestrode.
And galloped fiercely, as the chariot drove.

Each horrid face a grisly mask concealed,
Their busy eyes shot terror to my soul
As now and then, by the pale lanthorn's glare,
I saw them for their parted friend condole.

Before the hearse Death's chaplain seemed to go,
Who strove to comfort, what he could, the dead;
Talked much of Satan, and the land of woe,
And many a chapter from the Scriptures read.

At last he raised the swelling anthem high,
In dismal numbers seemed he to complain;
The captive tribes that by Euphrates wept,[13]
Their song was jovial to his dreary strain.

That done, they placed the carcass in the tomb,
To dust and dull oblivion now resigned,
Then turned the chariot toward the House of Night,
Which soon flew off, and left no trace behind.

But as I stooped to write the appointed verse,
Swifter than thought the airy scene decayed;
Blushing the morn arose, and from the east
With her gay streams of light dispelled the shade.

What is this Death, ye deep read sophists, say?—
Death is no more than one unceasing change;
New forms arise, while other forms decay,
Yet all is Life throughout creation's range.

The towering Alps, the haughty Appenine,
The Andes, wrapped in everlasting snow,
The Apalachian and the Ararat
Sooner or later must to ruin go.

Hills sink to plains, and man returns to dust,
That dust supports a reptile or a flower;
Each changeful atom by some other nursed
Takes some new form, to perish in an hour.

Too nearly joined to sickness, toils, and pains,
(Perhaps for former crimes imprisoned here)
True to itself the immortal soul remains,
And seeks new mansions in the starry sphere.

When Nature bids thee from the world retire,
With joy thy lodging leave, a fated guest;
In Paradise, the land of thy desire,
Existing always, always to be blessed.

1776? 1779, 1786

THE BEAUTIES OF SANTA CRUZ[1]

1776

Sweet orange grove, the fairest of the isle,
In thy soft shade luxuriously reclined,
Where, round my fragrant bed, the flowrets smile,
In sweet delusions I deceive my mind.

But melancholy's glooms assail my breast,
For potent nature reigns despotic here;—
A nation ruined, and a world oppressed,
Might rob the boldest stoic of a tear.

Sick of thy northern glooms, come, shepherd,[2] seek
More equal climes, and a serener sky;
Why shouldst thou toil amid thy frozen ground,
Where half year's snows, a barren prospect lie,

When thou mayst go where never frost was seen,
Or northwest winds with cutting fury blow,
Where never ice congealed the limped stream,
Where never mountain tipped its head with snow?

Twice seven days prosperous gales thy barque shall bear
To isles that flourish in perpetual green,

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[13] The Israelites. *Psalms* cxxxvii. 1.

[1] An island of the West Indies where Freneau spent some two years during the Revolution. As the motto-stanzas imply, he was unhappy while away from his country at war.

[2] Pastoral poetry, greatly in vogue in England three generations before, and even in Freneau's time still popular, was supposed, by its convention, to be the conversation of shepherds.

Where richest herbage glads each shady vale,
And ever verdant plants on every hill are seen.

Nor dread the dangers of the billowy deep,
Autumnal winds shall safely waft thee o'er;
Put off the timid heart, or, man unblessed,
Ne'er shalt thou reach this gay enchanting shore.

Thus Judah's tribes beheld the promised land,
While Jordan's angry waters swelled between;
Thus trembling on the brink I see them stand,
Heaven's type in view, the Canaanitish green.[3]

Thus, some mean souls, in spite of age and care,
Are so united to this globe below,
They never wish to cross death's dusky main,
That parting them and happiness doth flow.

Though reason's voice might whisper to the soul
That nobler climes for man the gods design—
Come, shepherd, haste — the northern breezes blow,
No more the slumbering winds thy barque confine.

From the vast caverns of old ocean's bed,
Fair Santa Cruz, arising, laves her waist,
The threatening waters roar on every side,
For every side by ocean is embraced.

Sharp, craggy rocks repel the surging brine,
Whose caverned sides by restless billows wore,
Resemblance claim to that remoter isle[4]
Where once the winds' proud lord the scepter bore.

Betwixt old Cancer and the mid-way line,
In happiest climate lies this envied isle,
Trees bloom throughout the year, streams ever flow,
And fragrant Flora wears a lasting smile.

Cool, woodland streams from shaded clifts descend,
The dripping rock no want of moisture knows,
Supplied by springs that on the skies depend,
That fountain feeding as the current flows.

Such were the isles which happy Flaccus sung,[5]
Where one tree blossoms while another bears,
Where spring forever gay, and ever young,
Walks her gay round through her unwearied years.

Such were the climes which youthful Eden saw
Ere crossing fates destroyed her golden reign—
Reflect upon thy loss, unhappy man,
And seek the vales of Paradise again.

No lowering skies are here—the neighboring sun
Clear and unveiled, his brilliant journey goes,
Each morn emerging from the ambient main,
And sinking there each evening to repose.

In June's fair month the spangled traveler gains
The utmost limits of his northern way,
And blesses with his beams cold lands remote,
Sad Greenland's coast, and Hudson's frozen bay.

The shivering swains of those unhappy climes
Behold the side-way monarch through the trees,
We feel his fiercer heat, his vertic beams,
Tempered with cooling winds and trade-wind breeze.

Yet, though so near heaven's blazing lamp doth run,
We court the beam that sheds the golden day,

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[3] The Jews had been promised the land of Canaan. They first saw its fertile stretches from across the river Jordan, after they had come up through the desert from Egypt.

[4] Æolia, the home of Æolus, god of winds.

[5] See Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus), *Epode* xvi.

And hence are called the children of the sun,
Who, without fainting, bear his downward ray.

No threatening tides upon our island rise,
Gay Cynthia[6] scarce disturbs the ocean here,
No waves approach her orb, and she, as kind,
Attracts no water to her silver sphere.

The happy waters boast, of various kinds,
Unnumbered myriads of the scaly race,
Sportive they glide above the deluged sand,
Gay as their clime, in ocean's ample vase.

Some streaked with burnished gold, resplendent glare,
Some cleave the limpid deep, all silvered o'er,
Some, clad in living green, delight the eye,
Some red, some blue; of mingled colors more.

Here glides the spangled Dolphin through the deep,
The giant-carcassed whales at distance stray,
The huge green turtles wallow through the wave,
Well pleased alike with land or water, they.

The Rainbow cuts the deep, of varied green,
The well fed Grouper lurks remote, below,
The swift Bonetta coasts the watery scene,
The diamond coated angels[7] kindle as they go.

. . . .

Sweet verdant isle, through thy dark woods I rove,
And learn the nature of each native tree,
The fustic hard, the poisonous manchineel,
Which for its fragrant apple pleaseth thee:

Alluring to the smell, fair to the eye,
But deadliest poison in the taste is found—
O shun the dangerous tree, nor taste, like Eve,
This interdicted fruit in Eden's ground.

The lowly mangrove, fond of watery soil,
The white barked gregory, rising high in air,
The mastic in the woods you may decry,
Tamarind, and lofty plum trees flourish there.

Sweet orange groves in lonely valleys rise
And drop their fruits, unnoticed and unknown,
And cooling acid limes in hedges grow,
The juicy lemons swell in shades their own.

. . . .

But, shepherd, haste, and leave behind thee far
The bloody plains, and iron glooms above,
Quit the cold northern star, and here enjoy,
Beneath the smiling skies, this land of love.

The drowsy pelican wings home his way,
The misty eve sits heavy on the sea,
And though yon sail drags slowly o'er the main,
Say, shall a moment's gloom discourage thee? . . . .

Haste, shepherd, haste—Hesperian[8] fruits for thee,
And clustered grapes from mingled boughs depend—
What pleasure in thy forests can there be
That, leafless now, to every tempest bend?

To milder stars, and skies of clearer blue,
Sworn foe to arms, at least awhile repair,
And, till to mightier force proud Britain bends,
Despise her triumphs, and deceive thy care.[9]

Soon shall the genius of the fertile soil
A new creation to thy view unfold;
Admire the works of nature's magic hand,
But scorn that vulgar bait, all-potent gold.

Yet, if persuaded by no lay of mine,
You still admire your climes of frost and snow,
And pleased, prefer above our southern groves
The darksome forests, that around thee grow:

Still there remain—thy native air enjoy,
Repel the tyrant who thy peace invades,
While, pleased, I trace the vales of Santa Cruz,
And sing with rapture her inspiring shades.

1776 1779

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[6] The moon; there is little tide around this island.

[7] The fishes of the West Indies, including the angel fish, are remarkably brilliant in color.

[8] The Hesperides, daughters of Atlas and Hesperis, guarded the golden apples.

[9] The poet calls his friend from the war-swept North (1776) till Britain shall be conquered.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE BRAVE AMERICANS

UNDER GENERAL GREENE, IN SOUTH CAROLINA, WHO FELL IN THE ACTION OF SEPTEMBER 8, 1781

At Eutaw Springs the valiant died;
Their limbs with dust are covered o'er—
Weep on, ye springs, your tearful tide;
How many heroes are no more!

If in this wreck of ruin, they
Can yet be thought to claim a tear,
O smite your gentle breast, and say
The friends of freedom slumber here!

Thou, who shalt trace this bloody plain,
If goodness rules thy generous breast,
Sigh for the wasted rural reign;
Sigh for the shepherds sunk to rest!

Stranger, their humble graves adorn;
You too may fall, and ask a tear:
'T is not the beauty of the morn
That proves the evening shall be clear.—

They saw their injured country's woe,
The flaming town, the wasted field;
Then rushed to meet the insulting foe;
They took the spear—but left the shield.

Led by thy conquering genius, Greene,
The Britons they compelled to fly;
None distant viewed the fatal plain,
None grieved in such a cause to die—

But, like the Parthians famed of old,
Who, flying, still their arrows threw,
These routed Britons, full as bold,
Retreated, and retreating slew.

Now rest in peace our patriot band;
Though far from nature's limits thrown,
We trust they find a happier land,
A brighter sunshine of their own.

1781 1781

STANZAS

OCCASIONED BY THE RUINS OF A COUNTRY INN, UNROOFED AND BLOWN DOWN IN A STORM

Where now these mingled ruins lie
A temple once to Bacchus[1] rose,
Beneath whose roof, aspiring high,
Full many a guest forgot his woes.

No more this dome, by tempests torn,
Affords a social safe retreat;
But ravens here, with eye forlorn,
And clustering bats henceforth will meet.

The priestess of this ruined shrine,
Unable to survive the stroke,
Presents no more the ruddy wine,
Her glasses gone, her china broke.

The friendly host, whose social hand
Accosted strangers at the door,
Has left at length his wonted stand,
And greets the weary guest no more.

Old creeping Time, that brings decay,
Might yet have spared these moldering walls,
Alike beneath whose potent sway
A temple or a tavern falls.

Is this the place where mirth and joy,
Coy nymphs, and sprightly lads were found?
Indeed! no more the nymphs are coy,
No more the flowing bowls go round.

Is this the place where festive song
Deceived the wintry hours away?
No more the swains the tune prolong,
No more the maidens join the lay:

Is this the place where Nancy slept
In downy beds of blue and green?—
Dame Nature here no vigils kept,
No cold unfeeling guards were seen.

'T is gone!—and Nancy tempts no more,
Deep, unrelenting silence reigns;
Of all that pleased, that charmed before,
The tottering chimney scarce remains!

Ye tyrant winds, whose ruffian blast
Through doors and windows blew too strong,
And all the roof to ruin cast,—
The roof that sheltered us so long,—

Your wrath appeased, I pray be kind
If Mopsus[2] should the dome renew;
That we again may quaff his wine,
Again collect our jovial crew.

1782

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[1] God of conviviality.

[2] Perhaps, as in idyllic poetry used for the name of a countryman.

THE WILD HONEYSUCKLE

Fair flower, that dost so comely grow,
Hid in this silent, dull retreat,
Untouched thy honied blossoms blow,
Unseen thy little branches greet:
No roving foot shall crush thee here,
No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in white arrayed,
She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,
And planted here the guardian shade,
And sent soft waters murmuring by;
Thus quietly thy summer goes,
Thy days declining to repose.

Smit with those charms, that must decay,
I grieve to see your future doom;
They died—nor were those flowers more gay,
The flowers that did in Eden bloom;
Unpitying frosts and Autumn's power
Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

From morning suns and evening dews
At first thy little being came:
If nothing once, you nothing lose,
For when you die you are the same;
The space between is but an hour,
The frail duration of a flower.
1786 1786

THE INDIAN BURYING GROUND

In spite of all the learned have said,
I still my old opinion keep;
The posture that we give the dead
Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands;—
The Indian, when from life released,
Again is seated with his friends,
And shares again the joyous feast.

His imaged birds, and painted bowl,
And venison, for a journey dressed,
Bespeak the nature of the soul,
Activity, that knows no rest.

His bow for action ready bent,
And arrows with a head of stone,
Can only mean that life is spent,
And not the old ideas gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,
No fraud upon the dead commit,—
Observe the swelling turf, and say
They do not lie, but here they sit.

Here still a lofty rock remains,
On which the curious eye may trace
(Now wasted half by wearing rains)
The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an aged elm aspires,
Beneath whose far-projecting shade
(And which the shepherd still admires)
The children of the forest played.

There oft a restless Indian queen
(Pale Shebah[1] with her braided hair)
And many a barbarous form is seen
To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dews,
In habit for the chase arrayed,
The hunter still the deer pursues,
The hunter and the deer, a shade!

And long shall timorous fancy see
The painted chief, and pointed spear,
And reason's self shall bow the knee
To shadows and delusions here.
1788

THE PARTING GLASS

The man that joins in life's career
And hopes to find some comfort here,
To rise above this earthly mass,—
The only way's to drink his glass.

But still, on this uncertain stage
Where hopes and fears the soul engage,
And while, amid the joyous band,
Unheeded flows the measured sand,
Forget not as the moments pass
That time shall bring the parting glass!

In spite of all the mirth I've heard,
This is the glass I always feared,
The glass that would the rest destroy,
The farewell cup, the close of joy!

With you, whom reason taught to think,
I could for ages sit and drink;
But with the fool, the sot, the ass,
I haste to take the parting glass.

The luckless wight, that still delays
His draught of joys to future days,
Delays too long—for then, alas!
Old age steps up, and—breaks the glass!

The nymph who boasts no borrowed charms,
Whose sprightly wit my fancy warms,—
What though she tends this country inn,
And mixes wine, and deals out gin?
With such a kind, obliging lass,
I sigh to take the parting glass.

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[1] I *Kings*, x.

With him who always talks of gain
(Dull Momus,[1] of the plodding train),
The wretch who thrives by others' woes,
And carries grief where'er he goes,—
With people of this knavish class
The first is still my parting glass.

With those that drink before they dine,
With him that apes the grunting swine,
Who fills his page with low abuse,
And strives to act the gabbling goose
Turned out by fate to feed on grass—
Boy, give me quick, the parting glass.

The man whose friendship is sincere,
Who knows no guilt, and feels no fear,—
It would require a heart of brass
With him to take the parting glass!

With him who quaffs his pot of ale,
Who holds to all an even scale,
Who hates a knave in each disguise,
And fears him not—whate'er his size—
With him, well pleased my days to pass,
May Heaven forbid the Parting Glass!

1790

ON A HONEY BEE

DRINKING FROM A GLASS OF WINE AND DROWNED THEREIN

Thou, born to sip the lake or spring,
Or quaff the waters of the stream,
Why hither come, on vagrant wing?
Does Bacchus[2] tempting seem,
Did he for you this glass prepare?
Will I admit you to a share?

Did storms harass or foes perplex,
Did wasps or king-birds bring dismay,
Did wars distress, or labors vex,
Or did you miss your way?
A better seat you could not take
Than on the margin of this lake.

Welcome!—I hail you to my glass:
All welcome here you find;
Here let the cloud of trouble pass,
Here be all care resigned.
This fluid never fails to please,
And drown the griefs of men or bees.

What forced you here we cannot know,
And you will scarcely tell,—
But cheery we would have you go
And bid a glad farewell:
On lighter wings we bid you fly,—
Your dart will now all foes defy.

Yet take not, oh! too deep a drink,
And in this ocean die;
Here bigger bees than you might sink,
Even bees full six feet high.
Like Pharaoh, then, you would be said
To perish in a sea of red.

Do as you please, your will is mine;
Enjoy it without fear,
And your grave will be this glass of wine,
Your epitaph—a tear;
Go, take your seat in Charon's[3] boat;
We'll tell the hive, you died afloat.

1809

TO A CATY-DID

In a branch of willow hid
Sings the evening Caty-did:
From the lofty locust bough
Feeding on a drop of dew,
In her suit of green arrayed
Hear her singing in the shade
Caty-did, Caty-did, Caty-did!

While upon a leaf you tread,
Or repose your little head,
On your sheet of shadows laid,
All the day you nothing said:
Half the night your cheery tongue
Reveled out its little song,
Nothing else but Caty-did.

From your lodgings on the leaf
Did you utter joy or grief?—
Did you only mean to say,
I have had my summer's day,
And am passing, soon, away
To the grave of Caty-did:—
Poor, unhappy Caty-did!

But you would have uttered more
Had you known of nature's power—
From the world when you retreat,
And a leaf's your winding sheet,
Long before your spirit fled,
Who can tell but nature said,
Live again, my Caty-did!
Live and chatter, Caty-did.

Tell me, what did Caty do?
Did she mean to trouble you?
Why was Caty not forbid
To trouble little Caty-did?

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[1] Momus, a god personifying mockery and ridicule.

[2] God of conviviality.

[3] The ferryman who carried the souls of the dead across the rivers of the underworld.

Wrong indeed at you to fling,
Hurting no one while you sing
Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

Why continue to complain?
Caty tells me, she again
Will not give you plague or pain:—
Caty says you may be hid
Caty will not go to bed
While you sing us Caty-did.
Caty-did! Caty-did! Caty-did!

But while singing, you forgot
To tell us what did Caty not:
Caty did not think of cold,
Flocks retiring to the fold,
Winter, with his wrinkles old,
Winter, that yourself foretold
When you gave us Caty-did.

Stay securely in your nest;
Caty now, will do her best,
All she can to make you blest;
But, you want no human aid—
Nature, when she formed you, said,
"Independent you are made,
My dear little Caty-did:
Soon yourself must disappear
With the verdure of the year,"—
And to go, we know not where,
With your song of Caty-did.

1815

JOEL BARLOW

Born at Reading, Connecticut, 1755, died, Zarnawiec, Poland, 1812. Educated at Dartmouth, and at Yale where he graduated in 1778 and was for a brief period tutor, Barlow for a time studied law, but was soon in the army as chaplain. After the war he led the life of a lawyer, agitator, and officeholder, actively supported the principles of the French Revolution in France and in London, was later consul at Algiers, and at his death was minister plenipotentiary to France and on a special mission to Poland to treat with Napoleon. His chief literary works are *The Vision of Columbus,* 1787, expanded into *The Columbiad,* 1807, and *The Hasty Pudding,* 1796.

THE HASTY PUDDING[1]

CANTO I

Ye Alps audacious, through the heavens that rise,
To cramp the day and hide me from the skies;
Ye Gallic flags, that o'er their heights unfurled,
Bear death to kings and freedom to the world,[2]
I sing not you. A softer theme I choose,
A virgin theme, unconscious of the muse,
But fruitful, rich, well suited to inspire
The purest frenzy of poetic fire.

Despise it not, ye bards to terror steeled,
Who hurl your thunders round the epic field;
Nor ye who strain your midnight throats to sing
Joys that the vineyard and the stillhouse bring;
Or on some distant fair your notes employ,
And speak of raptures that you ne'er enjoy.[3]
I sing the sweets I know, the charms I feel,
My morning incense, and my evening meal,—
The sweets of Hasty Pudding. Come, dear bowl,
Glide o'er my palate, and inspire my soul.
The milk beside thee, smoking from the kine,
Its substance mingled, married in with thine,
Shall cool and temper thy superior heat,
And save the pains of blowing while I eat.
Oh! could the smooth, the emblematic song
Flow like thy genial juices o'er my tongue,
Could those mild morsels in my numbers chime,
And, as they roll in substance, roll in rime,
No more thy awkward, unpoetic name
Should shun the muse or prejudice thy fame;
But, rising grateful to the accustomed ear,
All bards should catch it, and all realms revere!
Assist me first with pious toil to trace
Through wrecks of time, thy lineage and thy race;
Declare what lovely squaw, in days of yore,
(Ere great Columbus sought thy native shore)

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[1] When on a mission from the French government to Savoy in 1792-3 Barlow wrote *The Hasty Pudding*—hasty pudding is boiled cornmeal—with a dedication to Mrs. Washington. Barlow was serious in his desire to promote simplicity of diet and manners among his countrymen, but, wishing to make his appeal popular, he put it in the playful form of the mock-heroic. The poem may be compared with Trumbull's *M'Fingal.*

[2] France was at this time the exponent of liberty, standing alone against the rest of Europe.

[3] Barlow asks consideration from epic, convivial, and lyric poets.

First gave thee to the world; her works of fame
Have lived indeed, but lived without a name.
Some tawny Ceres,[4] goddess of her days,
First learned with stones to crack the well-dried maize,
Through the rough sieve to shake the golden shower,
In boiling water stir the yellow flour:
The yellow flour, bestrewed and stirred with haste,
Swells in the flood and thickens to a paste,
Then puffs and wallops, rises to the brim,
Drinks the dry knobs that on the surface swim;
The knobs at last the busy ladle breaks,
And the whole mass its true consistence takes.
Could but her sacred name, unknown so long,
Rise, like her labors, to the son of song,
To her, to them I'd consecrate my lays,
And blow her pudding with the breath of praise.
If 'twas Oella whom I sang before,[5]
I here ascribe her one great virtue more.
Not through the rich Peruvian realms alone
The fame of Sol's sweet daughter should be known,
But o'er the world's wide climes should live secure,
Far as his rays extend, as long as they endure.
Dear Hasty Pudding, what unpromised joy
Expands my heart, to meet thee in Savoy![6]
Doomed o'er the world through devious paths to roam,
Each clime my country, and each house my home,
My soul is soothed, my cares have found an end;
I greet my long-lost, unforgotten friend.
For thee through Paris, that corrupted town,
How long in vain I wandered up and down,
Where shameless Bacchus,[7] with his drenching hoard,
Cold from his cave usurps the morning board.
London is lost in smoke and steeped in tea;
No Yankee there can lisp the name of thee;
The uncouth word, a libel on the town,
Would call a proclamation from the crown.
For climes oblique, that fear the sun's full rays,
Chilled in their fogs, exclude the generous maize:
A grain whose rich, luxuriant growth requires
Short, gentle showers, and bright, ethereal fires.
But here, though distant from our native shore,
With mutual glee, we meet and laugh once more.
The same! I know thee by that yellow face,
That strong complexion of true Indian race,
Which time can never change, nor soil impair,
Nor Alpine snows, nor Turkey's morbid air;
For endless years, through every mild domain,
Where grows the maize, there thou art sure to reign.

But man, more fickle, the bold licence claims,
In different realms to give thee different names.
Thee the soft nations round the warm Levant
Polanta call; the French, of course, *Polante*.
E'en in thy native regions, how I blush
To hear the Pennsylvanians call thee *Mush!*
On Hudson's banks, while men of Belgic[8] spawn
Insult and eat thee by the name *Suppawn*.
All spurious appellations, void of truth;
I've better known thee from my earliest youth:
Thy name is *Hasty Pudding!* thus my sire
Was wont to greet thee fuming from his fire;
And while he argued in thy just defense
With logic clear he thus explained the sense:

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[4] Goddess of agriculture and harvest.

[5] Oella, imagined to be the daughter of a Peruvian chief, had been celebrated by Barlow in *The Vision of Columbus* as the inventor of spinning.

[6] Indian corn was then, as now, grown on the southern slopes of Savoy.

[7] God of wine and revelry.

[8] Referring to the Dutch settlers of New York, from the Low Countries, indeed, but not from Belgium.

"In haste the boiling caldron, o'er the blaze,
Receives and cooks the ready powdered maize;
In haste 'tis served, and then in equal haste,
With cooling milk, we make the sweet repast.
No carving to be done, no knife to grate
The tender ear and wound the stony plate;
But the smooth spoon, just fitted to the lip,
And taught with art the yielding mass to dip,
By frequent journeys to the bowl well stored,
Performs the hasty honors of the board."
Such is thy name, significant and clear,
A name, a sound to every Yankee dear,
But most to me, whose heart and palate chaste
Preserve my pure, hereditary taste.

There are who strive to stamp with disrepute
The luscious food, because it feeds the brute;
In tropes of high-strained wit, while gaudy prigs
Compare thy nursling, man, to pampered pigs;
With sovereign scorn I treat the vulgar jest,
Nor fear to share thy bounties with the beast.
What though the generous cow gives me to quaff
The milk nutritious: am I then a calf?
Or can the genius of the noisy swine,
Though nursed on pudding, thence lay claim to mine?
Sure the sweet song I fashion to thy praise,
Runs more melodious than the notes they raise.

My song, resounding in its grateful glee,
No merit claims: I praise myself in thee.
My father loved thee through his length of days!
For thee his fields were shaded o'er with maize;
From thee what health, what vigor he possessed,
Ten sturdy freemen from his loins attest;
Thy constellation ruled my natal morn,
And all my bones were made of Indian corn.
Delicious grain, whatever form it take,
To roast or boil, to smother or to bake,
In every dish 'tis welcome still to me,
But most, my Hasty Pudding, most in thee.

Let the green succotash with thee contend;
Let beans and corn their sweetest juices blend;
Let butter drench them in its yellow tide,
And a long slice of bacon grace their side;
Not all the plate, how famed soe'er it be,
Can please my palate like a bowl of thee.
Some talk of hoe-cake, fair Virginia's pride!
Rich johnny-cake this mouth has often tried;
Both please me well, their virtues much the same,
Alike their fabric, as allied their fame,
Except in dear New England, where the last
Receives a dash of pumpkin in the paste,
To give it sweetness and improve the taste.
But place them all before me, smoking hot,
The big, round dumpling, rolling from the pot;
The pudding of the bag, whose quivering breast,
With suet lined, leads on the Yankee feast;
The charlotte brown, within whose crusty sides
A belly soft the pulpy apple hides;
The yellow bread whose face like amber glows,
And all of Indian that the bakepan knows,—
You tempt me not; my favorite greets my eyes,
To that loved bowl my spoon by instinct flies.

Canto II

To mix the food by vicious rules of art,
To kill the stomach and to sink the heart,
To make mankind to social virtue sour,
Cram o'er each dish, and be what they devour;
For this the kitchen muse first framed her book,
Commanding sweats to stream from every cook;
Children no more their antic gambols tried,
And friends to physic wondered why they died.

Not so the Yankee: his abundant feast,
With simples furnished and with plainness dressed,

A numerous offspring gathers round the board,
And cheers alike the servant and the lord;
Whose well-bought hunger prompts the joyous taste,
And health attends them from the short repast.

While the full pail rewards the milkmaid's toil,
The mother sees the morning caldron boil;
To stir the pudding next demands their care;
To spread the table and the bowls prepare;
To feed the household as their portions cool
And send them all to labor or to school.
Yet may the simplest dish some rules impart,
For nature scorns not all the aids of art.
E'en Hasty Pudding, purest of all food,
May still be bad, indifferent, or good,
As sage experience the short process guides,
Or want of skill, or want of care presides.
Whoe'er would form it on the surest plan,
To rear the child and long sustain the man;
To shield the morals while it mends the size,
And all the powers of every food supplies,—
Attend the lesson that the muse shall bring,
Suspend your spoons, and listen while I sing.

But since, O man! thy life and health demand
Not food alone, but labor from thy hand,
First, in the field, beneath the sun's strong rays,
Ask of thy mother earth the needful maize;
She loves the race that courts her yielding soil,
And gives her bounties to the sons of toil.

When now the ox, obedient to thy call,
Repays the loan that filled the winter stall,
Pursue his traces o'er the furrowed plain,
And plant in measured hills the golden grain.
But when the tender germ begins to shoot,
And the green spire declares the sprouting root,
Then guard your nursling from each greedy foe,
The insidious worm, the all-devouring crow.
A little ashes sprinkled round the spire,
Soon steeped in rain, will bid the worm retire;
The feathered robber with his hungry maw
Swift flies the field before your man of straw,
A frightful image, such as schoolboys bring
When met to burn the Pope or hang the King.

Thrice in the season, through each verdant row,
Wield the strong plowshare and the faithful hoe;
The faithful hoe, a double task that takes,
To till the summer corn and roast the winter cakes.

Slow springs the blade, while checked by chilling rains,
Ere yet the sun the seat of Cancer[9] gains;
But when his fiercest fires emblaze the land,
Then start the juices, then the roots expand;
Then, like a column of Corinthian mold,
The stalk struts upward and the leaves unfold;
The bushy branches all the ridges fill,
Entwine their arms, and kiss from hill to hill.
Here cease to vex them; all your cares are done:
Leave the last labors to the parent sun;
Beneath his genial smiles, the well-dressed field,
When autumn calls, a plenteous crop shall yield.

Now the strong foliage bears the standards high,
And shoots the tall top-gallants to the sky;
The suckling ears their silky fringes bend,
And pregnant grown, their swelling coats distend;
The loaded stalk, while still the burden grows,
O'erhangs the space that runs between the rows;
High as a hop-field waves the silent grove,
A safe retreat for little thefts of love,
When the pledged roasting-ears invite the maid

---

[9] The sun enters the zodiacal sign of Cancer on June 21.

To meet her swain beneath the new-formed shade;
His generous hand unloads the cumbrous hill,
And the green spoils her ready basket fill;
Small compensation for the twofold bliss,
The promised wedding, and the present kiss.

Slight depredations these; but now the moon
Calls from his hollow tree the sly raccoon;
And while by night he bears his prize away,
The bolder squirrel labors through the day.
Both thieves alike, but provident of time,
A virtue rare, that almost hides their crime.
Then let them steal the little stores they can,
And fill their granaries from the toils of man;
We've one advantage where they take no part—
With all their wiles, they ne'er have found the art
To boil the Hasty Pudding; here we shine
Superior far to tenants of the pine;
This envied boon to man shall still belong,
Unshared by them in substance or in song.

At last the closing season browns the plain,
And ripe October gathers in the grain;
Deep-loaded carts the spacious corn-house fill;
The sack distended marches to the mill;
The laboring mill beneath the burden groans,
And showers the future pudding from the stones;
Till the glad housewife greets the powdered gold,
And the new crop exterminates the old.
Ah who can sing what every wight must feel,
The joy that enters with the bag of meal,
A general jubilee pervades the house,
Wakes every child and gladdens every mouse.

Canto III

The days grow short; but though the falling sun
To the glad swain proclaims his day's work done,
Night's pleasing shades his various tasks prolong,
And yield new subjects to my various song.
For now, the corn-house filled, the harvest home,
The invited neighbors to the husking come;
A frolic scene, where work, and mirth, and play,
Unite their charms to chase the hours away.

Where the huge heap lies centered in the hall,
The lamp suspended from the cheerful wall,
Brown, corn-fed nymphs, and strong, hard-handed beaux,
Alternate ranged, extend in circling rows,
Assume their seats, the solid mass attack;
The dry husks rustle, and the corncobs crack;
The song, the laugh, alternate notes resound,
And the sweet cider trips in silence round.

The laws of husking every wight can tell;
And sure no laws he ever keeps so well:
For each red ear a general kiss he gains,
With each smut ear she smuts the luckless swains;
But when to some sweet maid a prize is cast,
Red as her lips and taper as her waist,
She walks the round and culls one favored beau,
Who leaps the luscious tribute to bestow.
Various the sport, as are the wits and brains
Of well-pleased lasses and contending swains;
Till the vast mound of corn is swept away,
And he that gets the last ear wins the day.

Meanwhile, the housewife urges all her care,
The well-earned feast to hasten and prepare.
The sifted meal already waits her hand,
The milk is strained, the bowls in order stand,
The fire flames high; and as a pool—that takes
The headlong stream that o'er the milldam breaks—
Foams, roars, and rages with incessant toils,
So the vexed caldron rages, roars, and boils.

First with clean salt she seasons well the food,
Then strews the flour, and thickens all the flood.
Long o'er the simmering fire she lets it stand;
To stir it well demands a stronger hand;
The husband takes his turn: and round and round
The ladle flies; at last the toil is crowned;
When to the board the thronging huskers pour,
And take their seats as at the corn before.

I leave them to their feast. There still belong
More useful matters to my faithful song.
For rules there are, though ne'er unfolded yet,
Nice rules and wise, how pudding should be ate.
Some with molasses line the luscious treat,
And mix, like bards, the useful with the sweet.
A wholesome dish, and well deserving praise,
A great resource in those bleak wintry days,
When the chilled earth lies buried deep in snow,
And raging Boreas[10] dries the shivering cow.

Blest cow! thy praise shall still my notes employ,
Great source of health, the only source of joy;
Mother[11] of Egypt's god,—but sure, for me,
Were I to leave my God, I'd worship thee.
How oft thy teats these pious hands have pressed!
How oft thy bounties proved my only feast!
How oft I've fed thee with my favorite grain!
And roared, like thee, to see thy children slain!

Ye swains who know her various worth to prize,
Ah! house her well from winter's angry skies.
Potatoes, pumpkins, should her sadness cheer,
Corn from your crib, and mashes from your beer;
When spring returns, she'll well acquit the loan,
And nurse at once your infants and her own.
Milk then with pudding I should always choose;
To this in future I confine my muse,
Till she in haste some further hints unfold,
Well for the young, nor useless to the old.
First in your bowl the milk abundant take,
Then drop with care along the silver lake
Your flakes of pudding; these at first will hide
Their little bulk beneath the swelling tide;
But when their growing mass no more can sink,
When the soft island looms above the brink,
Then check your hand; you've got the portion due;
So taught our sires, and what they taught is true.

There is a choice in spoons. Though small appear
The nice distinction, yet to me 'tis clear.
The deep-bowled Gallic spoon, contrived to scoop
In ample draughts the thin, diluted soup,
Performs not well in those substantial things,
Whose mass adhesive to the metal clings;
Where the strong labial muscles must embrace
The gentle curve, and sweep the hollow space
With ease to enter and discharge the freight,
A bowl less concave, but still more dilate,
Becomes the pudding best. The shape, the size,
A secret rests, unknown to vulgar eyes.
Experienced feeders can alone impart
A rule so much above the lore of art.
These tuneful lips that thousand spoons have tried,
With just precision could the point decide,
Though not in song; the muse but poorly shines
In cones, and cubes, and geometric lines;
Yet the true form, as near as she can tell,
Is that small section of a goose-egg shell,
Which in two equal portions shall divide
The distance from the center to the side.

Fear not to slaver; 'tis no deadly sin.
Like the free Frenchman, from your joyous chin

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[10] The north wind.

[11] Barlow is perhaps a little confused in his Egyptian mythology. The cow was consecrated to Isis, the goddess of beauty and fertility.

Suspend the ready napkin; or, like me,
Poise with one hand your bowl upon your knee;
Just in the zenith your wise head project,
Your full spoon, rising in a line direct,
Bold as a bucket, heeds no drops that fall;
The wide-mouthed bowl will surely catch them all!

1792-93 1796

JOSEPH HOPKINSON

Born, Philadelphia, 1770, died there, 1842. He was son of Francis Hopkinson, author of *The Battle of the Kegs* and other poems, page 153, was educated at the University of Pennsylvania, studied and practiced law, was a member of Congress, 1815-1819, and from 1828 Judge of the United States District Court. He was chiefly influential in founding the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts.

HAIL COLUMBIA[1]

Hail, Columbia! happy land!
Hail, ye heroes! heaven-born band!
Who fought and bled in freedom's cause,
Who fought and bled in freedom's cause,
And when the storm of war was gone,
Enjoyed the peace your valor won.
Let independence be our boast,
Ever mindful what it cost;
Ever grateful for the prize,
Let its altar reach the skies.

Firm, united, let us be,
Rallying round our liberty;
As a band of brothers joined,[2]
Peace and safety we shall find.

Immortal patriots! rise once more:
Defend your rights, defend your shore:
Let no rude foe, with impious hand,
Let no rude foe, with impious hand,
Invade the shrine where sacred lies
Of toil and blood the well-earned prize.
While offering peace sincere and just,
In Heaven we place a manly trust,
That truth and justice will prevail,
And every scheme of bondage fail.

Firm, united, etc.

Sound, sound, the trump of fame!
Let Washington's great name
Ring through the world with loud applause;
Ring through the world with loud applause;
Let every clime to freedom dear,
Listen with a joyful ear.
With equal skill, and godlike power,
He governed in the fearful hour
Of horrid war; or guides, with ease,
The happier times of honest peace.

Firm, united, etc.

Behold the chief who now commands,[3]
Once more to serve his country, stands—
The rock on which the storm will beat,
The rock on which the storm will beat;
But, armed in virtue firm and true,
His hopes are fixed on Heaven and you.
When hope was sinking in dismay,
And glooms obscured Columbia's day,
His steady mind, from changes free,
Resolved on death or liberty.

Firm, united, let us be,
Rallying round our liberty;
As a band of brothers joined,
Peace and safety we shall find.

1798 1798

CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN

Born, Philadelphia, 1771, died there, 1810 Brown received a good classical schooling, studied law, but soon took up literary work in verse and prose as his vocation, being the first American to make imaginative literature his calling. He was the editor of several literary magazines, but his name is remembered for his novels, of which he wrote seven between 1797 and 1801. Of these the foremost are *Wieland*, 1798, and *Arthur Mervyn*, 1799, the latter being founded upon the actual experience of Brown in the yellow fever scourge in New York City.

From WIELAND[1]
OR
THE TRANSFORMATION

Chapter XVI

As soon as I arrived in sight of the front of the house, my attention was excited by a light from the window of my own chamber. No appearance could be less explicable. A meeting was expected with Carwin; but that he preoccupied my chamber, and had supplied himself with light, was not to be believed. What motive could influence him to adopt this conduct? Could I proceed until this was explained? Perhaps, if I should proceed to a distance in front, someone would be visible. A sidelong but feeble beam from the window fell upon the piny copse which skirted the bank. As I eyed it, it suddenly became mutable,[2] and, after flitting to and fro for a short time, it vanished. I turned my eye again towards the window, and perceived that the light was still there; but the change which I had noticed was occasioned by a change in the position of the lamp or candle within. Hence, that some person was there was an unavoidable inference.

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[1] Written in 1798 when war with France was urged by a large party in America and was expected by all. The song, appealing to patriotic rather than party feelings, became instantly popular with all factions.

[2] Throughout the eighteenth century *joined* and many other words of similar *oi* formation were pronounced to rime with *find*.

[3] Congress had voted an army for the expected war and had placed Washington in command.

[1] *Wieland*, the best formed of Brown's tales, is a romance of highly exciting materials and plot. Sustaining the plot is an element of mystery on a higher plane than that of the merely ghostly, and never wholly solved. The plot also depends on the chance coincidence of events, the result of much ingenuity on the author's part, sometimes producing effects highly dramatic,

I paused to deliberate on the propriety of advancing. Might I not advance cautiously, and, therefore, without danger? Might I not knock at the door, or call, and be apprised of the nature of my visitant before I entered? I approached and listened at the door, but could hear nothing. I knocked at first timidly, but afterwards with loudness. My signals were unnoticed. I stepped back and looked, but the light was no longer discernible. Was it suddenly extinguished by a human agent? What purpose but concealment was intended? Why was the illumination produced, to be thus suddenly brought to an end? And why, since someone was there, had silence been observed?

These were questions the solution of which may be readily supposed to be entangled with danger. Would not this danger, when measured by a woman's fears, expand into gigantic dimensions? Menaces of death; the stunning exertions of a warning voice; the known and unknown attributes of Carwin; our recent interview in this chamber; the preappointment of a meeting at this place and hour,—all thronged into my memory. What was to be done?

Courage is no definite or steadfast principle. Let that man who shall purpose to assign motives to the actions of another blush at his folly and forbear. Not more presumptuous would it be to attempt the classification of all nature and the scanning of supreme intelligence. I gazed for a minute at the window, and fixed my eyes, for a second minute, on the ground. I drew forth from my pocket, and opened, a penknife. "This," said I, "be my safeguard and avenger. The assailant shall perish, or myself shall fall."

I had locked up the house in the morning, but had the key of the kitchen door in my pocket. I therefore determined to gain access behind. Thither I hastened, unlocked, and entered. All was lonely, darksome, and waste. Familiar as I was with every part of my dwelling, I easily found my way to a closet, drew forth a taper, a flint, tinder, and steel, and in a moment, as it were, gave myself the guidance and protection of light.

What purpose did I meditate? Should I explore my way to my chamber, and confront the being who had dared to intrude into this recess and had labored for concealment? By putting out the light did he seek to hide himself, or mean only to circumvent my incautious steps? Yet was it not more probable that he desired my absence by thus encouraging the supposition that the house was unoccupied? I would see this man in spite of all impediments; ere I died, I would see his face, and summon him to penitence and retribution; no matter at what cost an interview was purchased. Reputation and life might be wrested from me by another, but my rectitude and honor were in my own keeping, and were safe.

I proceeded to the foot of the stairs. At such a crisis my thoughts may be supposed at no liberty to range; yet vague images rushed into my mind of the mysterious interposition which had been experienced on

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sometimes decidedly stagy. The atmosphere of the occult and the horrible in Brown may profitably be compared in detail with the like elements in the work of Hawthorne and Poe.

The Wieland family is beset with mysterious phenomena. The first of these, accompanied with the appearance of fire and attending the death of the father, are never fully explained, and lead the younger Wieland and his sister Clara to regard as connected with these and equally inexplicable, a second series consisting of mysterious voices. The latter are, in fact, produced by Carwin, a ventriloquist, who in wanton mischief imposes upon the family. Clara Wieland has every reason to fear Carwin as a villain in whose presence she is unsafe. Wieland, inheriting insanity, is played upon by Carwin through the voices until his mind suddenly gives way. In a religious mania he kills his wife, Catharine, who happens to be in his sister's house, and immediately goes home and destroys his own children.

The extract begins at this point. Clara, who tells the tale throughout, is returning late at night to her own home, where she lives with a single servant. She is expecting yet fearing to meet Carwin there. It is actually his face that she sees and his voice that she hears. Though she is really in no physical danger from Carwin, and he in fact tries to prevent her by means of his ventriloquial voice from entering the room where her sister-in-law lies murdered, she immediately concludes upon discovering the body that he has planned her own death, but by some mistake has killed her sister-in-law.

[2] Brown's pages abound in such indirect, sometimes quite obscure, phrasings.

the last night.[3] My case at present was not dissimilar; and, if my angel were not weary of fruitless exertions to save, might not a new warning be expected? Who could say whether his silence were ascribable to the absence of danger, or to his own absence?

In this state of mind, no wonder that a shivering cold crept through my veins; that my pause was prolonged; and that a fearful glance was thrown backward.

Alas! My heart droops, and my fingers are enervated; my ideas are vivid, but my language is faint: now know I what it is to entertain incommunicable sentiments. The chain of subsequent incidents is drawn through my mind, and, being linked with those which forewent, by turns rouse[4] up agonies and sink me into hopelessness.

Yet I will persist to the end. My narrative may be invaded by inaccuracy and confusion; but, if I live no longer, I will, at least, live to complete it. What but ambiguities, abruptnesses, and dark transitions, can be expected from the historian who is, at the same time, the sufferer of these disasters?

I have said that I cast a look behind. Some object was expected to be seen, or why should I have gazed in that direction? Two senses were at once assailed. The same piercing exclamation of *"Hold! hold!"* was uttered within the same distance of my ear. This it was that I heard. The airy undulation, and the shock given to my nerves, were real. Whether the spectacle which I beheld existed in my fancy or without might be doubted.

I had not closed the door of the apartment I had just left. The staircase, at the foot of which I stood, was eight or ten feet from the door, and attached to the wall through which the door led. My view, therefore, was sidelong, and took in no part of the room.

Through this aperture was a head thrust and drawn back with so much swiftness that the immediate conviction was, that thus much of a form ordinarily invisible had been unshrouded. The face was turned towards me. Every muscle was tense; the forehead and brows were drawn into vehement expression; the lips were stretched as in the act of shrieking, and the eyes emitted sparks, which, no doubt, if I had been unattended by a light, would have illuminated like the coruscations of a meteor. The sound and the vision were present, and departed together at the same instant; but the cry was blown into my ear, while the face was many paces distant.

This face was well suited to a being whose performances exceeded the standard of humanity; and yet its features were akin to those I had before seen. The image of Carwin was blended in a thousand ways with the stream of my thoughts. This visage was, perhaps, portrayed by my fancy. If so, it will excite no surprise that some of his lineaments were now discovered. Yet affinities were few and inconspicuous, and were lost amidst the blaze of opposite qualities.

What conclusion could I form? Be the face human or not, the intimation was imparted from above.[5] Experience had evinced the benignity of that being who gave it. Once he had interposed to shield me from harm, and subsequent events demonstrated the usefulness of that interposition. Now was I again warned to forbear. I was hurrying to the verge of the same gulf, and the same power was exerted to recall my steps. Was it possible for me not to obey? Was I capable of holding on in the same perilous career? Yes. Even of this I was capable!

The intimation was imperfect; it gave no form to my danger and prescribed no limits to my caution. I had formerly neglected it, and yet escaped. Might I not trust to the same issue? This idea might possess, though imperceptibly, some influence. I persisted; but it was not merely on this account. I cannot delineate the motives that led me on. I now speak as if no remnant of doubt existed in my mind as to the supernatural origin of these sounds; but this is owing to the imperfection of my language, for I only mean that the belief was more permanent and visited more frequently my sober meditations than its opposite. The immediate effects served only to undermine the foundations of my judgment and precipitate my resolutions.[6]

I must either advance or return. I chose the former, and began to ascend the stairs. The silence underwent no second interruption. My chamber door was closed, but unlocked, and, aided by vehement efforts of my courage, I opened and looked in.

No hideous or uncommon object was discernible. The danger, indeed, might easily have lurked out of sight, have sprung upon me as I entered, and have rent me with his iron talons; but I was blind to this fate, and advanced, though cautiously, into the room.

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[3] When the mysterious voice, apparently of a guardian presence, had held her back from danger.

[4] Brown's sentences are often, as here, loose and incorrect.

[5] As if by her good angel.

[6] Such situations are the joy of the modern psychological novelist. Brown merely states the real or supposed facts, without analysis, and gives the conclusion. Compare Poe and Hawthorne.

Still, everything wore its accustomed aspect. Neither lamp nor candle was to be found. Now, for the first time, suspicions were suggested as to the nature of the light which I had seen. Was it possible to have been the companion of that supernatural visage; a meteorous refulgence producible at the will of him to whom that visage belonged, and partaking of the nature of that which accompanied my father's death?

The closet was near, and I remembered the complicated horrors of which it had been productive.[7] Here, perhaps, was enclosed the source of my peril and the gratification of my curiosity. Should I adventure once more to explore its recesses? This was a resolution not easily formed. I was suspended in thought when, glancing my eye on the table, I perceived a written paper. Carwin's hand was instantly recognized, and, snatching up the paper, I read as follows:—

"There was folly in expecting your compliance with my invitation. Judge how I was disappointed in finding another in your place. I have waited, but to wait any longer would be perilous. I shall still seek an interview, but it must be at a different time and place; meanwhile, I will write this—How will you bear—how inexplicable will be this transaction!—An event so unexpected,—a sight so horrible!"

Such was this abrupt and unsatisfactory script. The ink was yet moist; the hand was that of Carwin. Hence it was to be inferred that he had this moment left the apartment, or was still in it. I looked back, on the sudden expectation of seeing him behind me.

What other did he mean? What transaction had taken place adverse to my expectations? What sight was about to be exhibited? I looked around me once more, but saw nothing which indicated strangeness. Again I remembered the closet, and was resolved to seek in that the solution of these mysteries. Here, perhaps, was enclosed the scene destined to awaken my horrors and baffle my foresight.

I have already said that the entrance into this closet was beside my bed, which, on two sides, was closely shrouded by curtains. On that side nearest the closet the curtain was raised. As I passed along I cast my eye thither. I started, and looked again. I bore a light in my hand, and brought it nearer my eyes, in order to dispel any illusive mists that might have hovered before them. Once more I fixed my eyes upon the bed, in hope that this more steadfast scrutiny would annihilate the object which before seemed to be there.

This, then, was the sight which Carwin had predicted! This was the event which my understanding was to find inexplicable! This was the fate which had been reserved for me, but which, by some untoward chance, had befallen another!

I had not been terrified by empty menaces. Violation and death awaited my entrance into this chamber. Some inscrutable chance had led *her* hither before me, and the merciless fangs of which I was designed to be the prey had mistaken their victim, and had fixed themselves in *her* heart. But where was my safety? Was the mischief exhausted or flown? The steps of the assassin had just been here; they could not be far off; in a moment he would rush into my presence, and I should perish under the same polluting and suffocating grasp!

My frame shook, and my knees were unable to support me. I gazed alternately at the closet door and at the door of my room. At one of these avenues would enter the exterminator of my honor and my life. I was prepared for defense; but, now that danger was imminent, my means of defense and my power to use them were gone. I was not qualified by education and experience to encounter perils like these; or perhaps I was powerless because I was again assaulted by surprise, and had not fortified my mind by foresight and previous reflection against a scene like this.

Fears for my own safety again yielded place to reflections on the scene before me. I fixed my eyes upon her countenance. My sister's[8] well-known and beloved features could not be concealed by convulsion or lividness. What direful illusion led thee hither? Bereft of thee, what hold on happiness remains to thy offspring and thy spouse? To lose thee by a common fate would have been sufficiently hard; but thus suddenly to perish,—to become the prey of this ghastly death! How will a spectacle like this be endured by Wieland? To die beneath his grasp would not satisfy thy enemy. This was mercy to the evils which he previously made thee suffer! After these evils death was a boon which thou besoughtest him to grant. He entertained no enmity against thee; I was the object of his treason; but by some tremendous mistake his fury was misplaced. But how comest thou hither? and where was Wieland in thy hour of distress?

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[7] Before this, Carwin had concealed himself there and terrified Clara by means of the mysterious voice.

[8] sister-in-law's

I approached the corpse; I lifted the still flexible hand, and kissed the lips which were breathless. Her flowing drapery was discomposed. I restored it to order, and, seating myself on the bed, again fixed steadfast eyes upon her countenance. I cannot distinctly recollect the ruminations of that moment. I saw confusedly, but forcibly, that every hope was extinguished with the life of Catharine. All happiness and dignity must henceforth be banished from the house and name of Wieland; all that remained was to linger out in agonies a short existence and leave to the world a monument of blasted hopes and changeable fortune. Pleyel[9] was already lost to me; yet, while Catharine lived, life was not a detestable possession. But now, severed from the companion of my infancy, the partaker of all my thoughts, my cares, and my wishes, I was like one set afloat upon a stormy sea and hanging his safety upon a plank; night was closing upon him, and an unexpected surge had torn him from his hold and overwhelmed him forever.[10]

Chapter XXV

. . . . "Sister," said he,[11] in an accent mournful and mild, "I have acted poorly my part in this world. What thinkest thou? Shall I not do better in the next?"

I could make no answer. The mildness of his tone astonished and encouraged me. I continued to regard him with wistful and anxious looks.

"I think," resumed he, "I will try. My wife and my babes have gone before. Happy wretches! I have sent you to repose, and ought not to linger behind."

These words had a meaning sufficiently intelligible. I looked at the open knife in his hand and shuddered, but knew not how to prevent the deed which I dreaded. He quickly noticed my fears, and comprehended them. Stretching towards me his hand, with an air of increasing mildness, "Take it," said he; "fear not for thy own sake, nor for mine. The cup is gone by, and its transient inebriation is succeeded by the soberness of truth.

"Thou angel whom I was wont to worship! Fearest thou, my sister, for thy life? Once it was the scope of my labors to destroy thee, but I was prompted to the deed by heaven; such, at least, was my belief. Thinkest thou that thy death was sought to gratify malevolence? No. I am pure from all stain. I believed that my God was my mover!

"Neither thee nor myself have I cause to injure. I have done my duty; and surely there is merit in having sacrificed to that all that is dear to the heart of man. If a devil has deceived me, he came in the habit of an angel. If I erred, it was not my judgment that deceived me, but my senses. In thy sight, Being of beings! I am still pure. Still will I look for my reward in thy justice!"

Did my ears truly report these sounds? If I did not err, my brother was restored to just perceptions. He knew himself to have been betrayed to the murder of his wife and children, to have been the victim of infernal artifice; yet he found consolation in the rectitude of his motives. He was not devoid of sorrow, for this was written on his countenance; but his soul was tranquil and sublime.

Perhaps this was merely a transition of his former madness into a new shape. Perhaps he had not yet awakened to the memory of the horrors which he had perpetrated. Infatuated wretch that I was! To set myself up as a model by which to judge of my heroic brother! My reason taught me that his conclusions were right; but, conscious of the impotence of reason over my own conduct, conscious of my cowardly rashness and my criminal despair, I doubted whether anyone could be steadfast and wise.

Such was my weakness, that even in the midst of these thoughts my mind glided into abhorrence of Carwin, and I uttered, in a low voice. "O Carwin! Carwin! what hast thou to answer for?"

My brother immediately noticed the involuntary exclamation. "Clara!" said he, "be thyself. Equity used to be a theme for thy eloquence. Reduce its lessons to practice, and be just to that unfortunate man. The instrument has done its work, and I am satisfied.

"I thank thee, my God, for this last illumination! My enemy is thine also. I deemed him to be man,—the man with whom I have often communed; but now thy goodness has unveiled to me his true nature. As the performer of thy behests, he is my friend."

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[9] Catharine's brother whom Clara loved but who had been turned against Clara by Carwin.

[10] The scene in its possibilities of physical terror is scarcely equaled elsewhere by Brown. Contrast his handling of it with that of the usual treatment of such scenes a century later.

[11] In the interval, Wieland has been confined in a madhouse, possessed now with the idea that he must add Clara to the quota of his religious sacrifices. Carwin, unaware of the tragedy for which he is partly responsible, comes to explain himself to Clara in her own house. He confesses the source of the voices but honestly disavows any criminal intent. At this moment Wieland himself appears, wild and tattered, just escaped from his keepers, and bent upon the death of Clara. At intervals he appears lucid. It is he who speaks.

My heart began now to misgive me. His mournful aspect had gradually yielded place to a serene brow. A new soul appeared to actuate his frame, and his eyes to beam with preternatural luster. These symptoms did not abate, and he continued:—

"Clara, I must not leave thee in doubt. I know not what brought about thy interview with the being whom thou callest Carwin. For a time I was guilty of thy error, and deduced from his incoherent confessions that I had been made the victim of human malice. He left us at my bidding, and I put up a prayer that my doubts should be removed. Thy eyes were shut and thy ears sealed to the vision that answered my prayer.

"I was indeed deceived. The form thou hast seen was the incarnation of a demon. The visage and voice which urged me to the sacrifice of my family were his. Now he personates a human form; then he was environed with the luster of heaven.

"Clara," he continued, advancing closer to me, "thy death must come. This minister is evil, but he from whom his commission was received is God. Submit then with all thy wonted resignation to a decree that cannot be reversed or resisted. Mark the clock. Three minutes are allowed to thee, in which to call up thy fortitude and prepare thee for thy doom." There he stopped.

Even now, when this scene exists only in memory, when life and all its functions have sunk into torpor, my pulse throbs, and my hairs uprise; my brows are knit, as then, and I gaze around me in distraction. I was unconquerably averse to death; but death, imminent and full of agony as that which was threatened, was nothing. This was not the only or chief inspirer of my fears.

For him, not for myself, was my soul tormented. I might die, and no crime, surpassing the reach of mercy, would pursue me to the presence of my Judge; but my assassin would survive to contemplate his deed, and that assassin was Wieland!

Wings to bear me beyond his reach I had not. I could not vanish with a thought. The door was open, but my murderer was interposed between that and me. Of self-defense I was incapable. The frenzy that lately prompted me to blood was gone: my state was desperate; my rescue was impossible.

The weight of these accumulated thoughts could not be borne. My sight became confused; my limbs were seized with convulsion; I spoke, but my words were half formed:—

"Spare me, my brother! Look down, righteous Judge! snatch me from this fate! take away this fury from him, or turn it elsewhere!"

Such was the agony of my thoughts that I noticed not steps entering my apartment. Supplicating eyes were cast upward; but when my prayer was breathed I once more wildly gazed at the door. A form met my sight; I shuddered as if the God whom I invoked were present. It was Carwin that again intruded, and who stood before me, erect in attitude and steadfast in look!

The sight of him awakened new and rapid thoughts. His recent tale was remembered; his magical transitions and mysterious energy of voice. Whether he were infernal or miraculous or human, there was no power and no need to decide. Whether the contriver or not of this spell, he was able to unbind it, and to check the fury of my brother. He had ascribed to himself intentions not malignant. Here now was afforded a test of his truth. Let him interpose, as from above; revoke the savage decree which the madness of Wieland has assigned to heaven, and extinguish forever this passion for blood!

My mind detected at a glance this avenue to safety. The recommendations it possessed thronged as it were together, and made but one impression on my intellect. Remoter effects and collateral dangers I saw not. Perhaps the pause of an instant had sufficed to call them up. The improbability that the influence which governed Wieland was external or human; the tendency of this stratagem to sanction so fatal an error or substitute a more destructive rage in place of this; the insufficiency of Carwin's mere muscular forces to counteract the efforts and restrain the fury of Wieland, might, at a second glance, have been discovered; but no second glance was allowed. My first thought hurried me to action, and, fixing my eyes upon Carwin, I exclaimed,—

"O wretch! once more hast thou come? Let it be to abjure thy malice; to counterwork this hellish stratagem; to turn from me and from my brother this desolating rage!

"Testify thy innocence or thy remorse; exert the powers which pertain to thee, whatever they be, to turn aside this ruin. Thou art the author of these horrors! What have I done to deserve thus to die? How have I merited this unrelenting persecution? I adjure thee, by that God whose voice thou hast dared to counterfeit, to save my life!

"Wilt thou then go?—leave me! Succorless!"

Carwin listened to my entreaties unmoved, and turned from me. He seemed to hesitate a moment,—then glided through the door. Rage and despair stifled my utterance. The interval of respite was past; the pangs reserved for me by Wieland were not to be endured; my thoughts rushed again into anarchy. Having received the knife from his hand, I held it loosely and without regard; but now it seized again my attention, and I grasped it with force.

He seemed to notice not the entrance or exit of Carwin. My gesture and the murderous weapon appeared to have escaped his notice. His silence was unbroken; his eye, fixed upon the clock for a time, was now withdrawn; fury kindled in every feature; all that was human in his face gave way to an expression supernatural and tremendous. I felt my left arm within his grasp.

Even now I hesitated to strike. I shrunk from his assault, but in vain.

Here let me desist. Why should I rescue this event from oblivion? Why should I paint this detestable conflict? Why not terminate at once this series of horrors?—Hurry to the verge of the precipice, and cast myself forever beyond remembrance and beyond hope?

Still I live; with this load upon my breast; with this phantom to pursue my steps; with adders lodged in my bosom, and stinging me to madness; still I consent to live!

Yes! I will rise above the sphere of mortal passions; I will spurn at the cowardly remorse that bids me seek impunity in silence, or comfort in forgetfulness. My nerves shall be new-strung to the task. Have I not resolved? I will die. The gulf before me is inevitable and near. I will die, but then only when my tale is at an end.

CHAPTER XXVI

My right hand, grasping the unseen knife, was still disengaged. It was lifted to strike. All my strength was exhausted but what was sufficient to the performance of this deed. Already was the energy awakened and the impulse given that should bear the fatal steel to his heart, when—Wieland shrunk back; his hand was withdrawn. Breathless with affright and desperation, I stood, freed from his grasp; unassailed; untouched.

Thus long had the power which controlled the scene forborne to interfere: but now his might was irresistible; and Wieland in a moment was disarmed of all his purposes. A voice, louder than human organs could produce, shriller than language can depict, burst from the ceiling and commanded him—*to hold!*

Trouble and dismay succeeded to the steadfastness that had lately been displayed in the looks of Wieland. His eyes roved from one quarter to another, with an expression of doubt. He seemed to wait for a further intimation.

Carwin's agency was here easily recognized. I had besought him to interpose in my defense. He had flown. I had imagined him deaf to my prayer, and resolute to see me perish; yet he disappeared merely to devise and execute the means of my relief.

Why did he not forbear when this end was accomplished? Why did his misjudging zeal and accursed precipitation overpass that limit? Or meant he thus to crown the scene, and conduct his inscrutable plots to this consummation?

Such ideas were the fruit of subsequent contemplation. This moment was pregnant with fate. I had no power to reason. In the career of my tempestuous thoughts, rent into pieces as my mind was by accumulating horrors, Carwin was unseen and unsuspected. I partook of Wieland's credulity, shook with his amazement, and panted with his awe.

Silence took place for a moment: so much as allowed the attention to recover its post. Then new sounds were uttered from above:—

"Man of errors! cease to cherish thy delusion; not heaven or hell, but thy senses, have misled thee to commit these acts. Shake off thy frenzy, and ascend into rational and human. Be lunatic no longer."

My brother opened his lips to speak. His tone was terrific[12] and faint. He muttered an appeal to heaven. It was difficult to comprehend the theme of his inquiries. They implied doubt as to the nature of the impulse that hitherto had guided him, and questioned whether he had acted in consequence of insane perceptions.

To these interrogatories the voice, which now seemed to hover at his shoulder, loudly answered in the affirmative. Then uninterrupted silence ensued.

Fallen from his lofty and heroic station; now finally restored to the perception of truth; weighed to earth by the recollection of his own deeds; consoled no longer by a consciousness of rectitude for the loss of offspring and wife,—a loss for which he was indebted to his own misguided hand,—Wieland was transformed[13] at once into the *man of sorrows!*

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[12] terror-struck (loosely used)

He reflected not that credit should be as reasonably denied to the last as to any former intimation; that one might as justly be ascribed to erring or diseased senses as the other. He saw not that this discovery in no degree affected the integrity of his conduct; that his motives had lost none of their claims to the homage of mankind; that the preference of supreme good, and the boundless energy of duty, were undiminished in his bosom.

It is not for me to pursue him through the ghastly changes of his countenance. Words he had none. Now he sat upon the floor, motionless in all his limbs, with his eyes glazed and fixed, a monument of woe.

Anon a spirit of tempestuous but undesigning activity seized him. He rose from his place and strode across the floor, tottering and at random. His eyes were without moisture, and gleamed with the fire that consumed his vitals. The muscles of his face were agitated by convulsions. His lips moved, but no sound escaped him.

That nature should long sustain this conflict was not to be believed. My state was little different from that of my brother. I entered, as it were, into his thoughts. My heart was visited and rent by his pangs. "Oh that thy frenzy had never been cured! that thy madness, with its blissful visions, would return! or, if that must not be, that thy scene would hasten to a close!—that death would cover thee with his oblivion!

"What can I wish for thee? Thou who hast vied with the great Preacher of thy faith in sanctity of motives, and in elevation above sensual and selfish! Thou whom thy fate has changed into parricide and savage! Can I wish for the continuance of thy being? No."

For a time his movements seemed destitute of purpose. If he walked; if he turned; if his fingers were entwined with each other; if his hands were pressed against opposite sides of his head with a force sufficient to crush it into pieces; it was to tear his mind from self-contemplation; to waste his thoughts on external objects.

Speedily this train was broken. A beam appeared to be darted into his mind which gave a purpose to his efforts. An avenue to escape presented itself; and now he eagerly gazed about him. When my thoughts became engaged by his demeanor, my fingers were stretched as by a mechanical force, and the knife, no longer heeded or of use, escaped from my grasp and fell unperceived on the floor. His eye now lighted upon it; he seized it with the quickness of thought.

I shrieked aloud, but it was too late. He plunged it to the hilt in his neck; and his life instantly escaped with the stream that gushed from the wound. He was stretched at my feet and my hands were sprinkled with his blood as he fell.

Such was thy last deed, my brother! For a spectacle like this was it my fate to be reserved! Thy eyes were closed—thy face ghastly with death—thy arms, and the spot where thou lyedst, floated in thy life's blood! These images have not for a moment forsaken me. Till I am breathless and cold, they must continue to hover in my sight. . . .

1788 1798

WASHINGTON IRVING

Born, New York City, 1783, died, "Sunnyside," near Tarrytown, New York, 1859. Irving, the first American writer to win continental fame, and also the first of the long line of American "literary diplomats," was of well-to-do parents, was privately educated, studied law but inclined toward literature. He traveled in Europe, 1805-1806, and was in journalism and business in New York until 1815, when he went to England on business, and remained in Europe for seventeen years, being attaché of the American legation at Madrid, and secretary to that at London, 1826-1832. He then settled at "Sunnyside," but was United States minister to Spain, 1842-1846. His chief works are *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, 1809; *Sketch Book*, 1819; *Bracebridge Hall*, 1822; *Tales of a Traveller*, 1824; *History of Columbus*, 1828; *A Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada*, 1829; *The Alhambra*, 1832; *Crayon Miscellanies*, 1835; *Astoria*, 1836; *Life of Goldsmith*, 1849; *Life of Washington*, 1855-1859.

From A HISTORY OF NEW YORK,[1]

BY DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER

BOOK III

IN WHICH IS RECORDED THE GOLDEN REIGN OF WOUTER VAN TWILLER

CHAPTER I

Of the renowned Wouter Van Twiller,[2] his unparalleled virtues—as likewise his unutterable wisdom in the law-case of Wandle Schoonhoven and Barent Bleecker—and the great admiration of the public thereat.

Grievous and very much to be commiserated is the task of the feeling historian, who writes the history of his native land. If it fall to his lot to be the recorder of calamity or crime, the mournful page is watered with his tears; nor can he recall the most prosperous and blissful era, without a melancholy sigh at the reflection that it has passed away forever! I know not whether it be owing to an immoderate love for the simplicity of former times, or to that certain tenderness of heart incident to all sentimental historians; but I candidly confess that I cannot look back on the happier days of our city, which I now describe, without great dejection of spirit. With faltering hand do I withdraw the curtain of oblivion that veils the modest merit of our venerable ancestors, and as their figures rise to my mental vision, humble myself before their mighty shades.

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[13] See the sub-title at the head of the selection.

[1] The Knickerbocker's *History of New York* "from the beginning of the world to the end of the Dutch dynasty" was written and published as

Such are my feelings when I revisit the family mansion of the Knickerbockers, and spend a lonely hour in the chamber where hang the portraits of my forefathers, shrouded in dust, like the forms they represent. With pious reverence do I gaze on the countenances of those renowned burghers, who have preceded me in the steady march of existence,—whose sober and temperate blood now meanders through my veins, flowing slower and slower in its feeble conduits, until its current shall soon be stopped forever!

These, I say to myself, are but frail memorials of the mighty men who flourished in the days of the patriarchs; but who, alas, have long since moldered in that tomb towards which my steps are insensibly and irresistibly hastening! As I pace the darkened chamber and lose myself in melancholy musings, the shadowy images around me almost seem to steal once more into existence,—their countenances to assume the animation of life,—their eyes to pursue me in every movement! Carried away by the delusions of fancy, I almost imagine myself surrounded by the shades of the departed, and holding sweet converse with the worthies of antiquity! Ah, hapless Diedrich! born in a degenerate age, abandoned to the buffetings of fortune,—a stranger and a weary pilgrim in thy native land,—blest with no weeping wife, nor family of helpless children, but doomed to wander neglected through those crowded streets, and elbowed by foreign upstarts from those fair abodes where once thine ancestors held sovereign empire!

Let me not, however, lose the historian in the man, nor suffer the doting recollections of age to overcome me, while dwelling with fond garrulity on the virtuous days of the patriarchs,—on those sweet days of simplicity and ease, which never more will dawn on the lovely island of Manna-hata.[3]

These melancholy reflections have been forced from me by the growing wealth and importance of New Amsterdam, which, I plainly perceive, are to involve it in all kinds of perils and disasters. Already, as I observed at the close of my last book, they had awakened the attentions of the mother-country. The usual mark of protection shown by mother-countries to wealthy colonies was forthwith manifested; a governor being sent out to rule over the province, and squeeze out of it as much revenue as possible. The arrival of a governor of course put an end to the protectorate of Oloffe the Dreamer.[4] He appears, however, to have dreamt to some purpose during his sway, as we find him afterwards living as a patroon[5] on a great landed estate on the banks of the Hudson; having virtually forfeited all right to his ancient appellation of Kortlandt or Lackland.

It was in the year of our Lord 1629[6] that Mynheer Wouter Van Twiller was appointed governor of the province of Nieuw Nederlandts, under the commission and control of their High Mightinesses the Lords States General of the United Netherlands, and the privileged West India Company.

This renowned old gentleman arrived at New Amsterdam in the merry month of June, the sweetest month in all the year; when dan Apollo[7] seems to dance up the transparent firmament,—when the robin, the thrush, and a thousand other wanton songsters, make the woods to resound with amorous ditties, and the luxurious little boblincon[8] revels among the clover blossoms of the meadows,—all which happy coincidence persuaded the old dames of New Amsterdam, who were skilled in the art of foretelling events, that this was to be a happy and prosperous administration.

Irving says, as a "temporary *jeu d'esprit*." Its nominal author, Diedrich Knickerbocker, disappeared and left behind a manuscript which his landlord seized and sold and which was finally published as the *History*. The old Dutch aristocracy of New York, or New Amsterdam as it was formerly called, at first felt itself scandalized at the free treatment of its ancestry, but for the most part soon forgave the author because of the sheer good humor of the whole work. See Irving's introduction to *Rip Van Winkle*, p. 208.

[2] Born in Holland about 1580; governor of New Netherlands 1633-1637.

[3] Manhattan, the Indian name of the island on which New York stands.

[4] Oloffe Van Kortland (Shortland or Lackland), leader of the Dutch in their first settlement of Manhattan.

[5] landed proprietor

[6] Irving's date is historically incorrect. See note 2.

[7] Apollo, the sun-god; dan, from Latin, *dominus* (cf. Don), lord.

[8] bobolink

The renowned Wouter (or Walter) Van Twiller was descended from a long line of Dutch burgomasters, who had successively dozed away their lives, and grown fat upon the bench of magistracy in Rotterdam; and who had comported themselves with such singular wisdom and propriety, that they were never either heard or talked of—which, next to being universally applauded, should be the object of ambition of all magistrates and rulers. There are two opposite ways by which some men make a figure in the world: one, by talking faster than they think, and the other, by holding their tongues and not thinking at all. By the first, many a smatterer acquires the reputation of a man of quick parts; by the other, many a dunderpate, like the owl, the stupidest of birds, comes to be considered the very type of wisdom. This, by the way, is a casual remark, which I would not, for the universe, have it thought I apply to Governor Van Twiller. It is true he was a man shut up within himself, like an oyster, and rarely spoke, except in monosyllables; but then it was allowed he seldom said a foolish thing. So invincible was his gravity that he was never known to laugh or even to smile through the whole course of a long and prosperous life. Nay, if a joke were uttered in his presence, that set light-minded hearers in a roar, it was observed to throw him into a state of perplexity. Sometimes he would deign to inquire into the matter, and when, after much explanation, the joke was made as plain as a pike-staff, he would continue to smoke his pipe in silence, and at length, knocking out the ashes, would exclaim, "Well! I see nothing in all that to laugh about."

With all his reflective habits, he never made up his mind on a subject. His adherents accounted for this by the astonishing magnitude of his ideas. He conceived every subject on so grand a scale that he had not room in his head to turn it over and examine both sides of it. Certain it is, that, if any matter were propounded to him on which ordinary mortals would rashly determine at first glance, he would put on a vague, mysterious look, shake his capacious head, smoke some time in profound silence, and at length observe, that 'he had his doubts about the matter'; which gained him the reputation of a man slow of belief and not easily imposed upon. What is more, it gained him a lasting name; for to this habit of the mind has been attributed his surname of Twiller; which is said to be a corruption of the original Twijfler, or, in plain English, Doubter.

The person of this illustrious old gentleman was formed and proportioned as though it had been molded by the hands of some cunning Dutch statuary, as a model of majesty and lordly grandeur. He was exactly five feet six inches in height, and six feet five inches in circumference. His head was a perfect sphere, and of such stupendous dimensions that Dame Nature, with all her sex's ingenuity, would have been puzzled to construct a neck capable of supporting it; wherefore she wisely declined the attempt, and settled it firmly on the top of his backbone, just between the shoulders. His body was oblong and particularly capacious at bottom; which was wisely ordered by Providence, seeing that he was a man of sedentary habits, and very averse to the idle labor of walking. His legs were short, but sturdy in proportion to the weight they had to sustain; so that when erect he had not a little the appearance of a beer-barrel on skids. His face, that infallible index of the mind, presented a vast expanse, unfurrowed by any of those lines and angles which disfigure the human countenance with what is termed expression. Two small gray eyes twinkled feebly in the midst, like two stars of lesser magnitude in a hazy firmament, and his full-fed cheeks, which seemed to have taken toll of everything that went into his mouth, were curiously mottled and streaked with dusky red, like a spitzenburgh apple.

His habits were as regular as his person. He daily took his four stated meals, appropriating exactly an hour to each; he smoked and doubted eight hours, and he slept the remaining twelve of the four-and-twenty. Such was the renowned Wouter Van Twiller,—a true philosopher, for his mind was either elevated above, or tranquilly settled below, the cares and perplexities of this world. He had lived in it for years, without feeling the least curiosity to know whether the sun revolved round it, or it round the sun; and he had watched, for at least half a century, the smoke curling from his pipe to the ceiling, without once troubling his head with any of those numerous theories by which a philosopher would have perplexed his brain, in accounting for its rising above the surrounding atmosphere.

In his council he presided with great state and solemnity. He sat in a huge chair of solid oak, hewn in the celebrated forest of the Hague, fabricated by an experienced timmerman[9] of Amsterdam, and curiously carved about the arms and feet, into exact imitations of gigantic eagle's claws. Instead of a scepter he swayed a long Turkish pipe, wrought with jasmin and amber, which had been presented to a stadtholder[10] of Holland at the conclusion of a treaty with one of the petty Barbary powers. In this stately chair would he sit, and this magnificent pipe would he smoke, shaking his right knee with a constant motion, and fixing his eye for hours together upon a little print of Amsterdam, which hung in a black frame against the opposite wall of the council-chamber. Nay, it has even been said, that when any deliberation of extraordinary length and intricacy was on the carpet, the renowned Wouter would shut his eyes for full two hours at a time, that he might not be disturbed by external objects; and at such times the internal commotion of his mind was evinced by certain regular guttural sounds, which his admirers declared were merely the noise of conflict made by his contending doubts and opinions.

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[9] carpenter (Dutch)

It is with infinite difficulty I have been enabled to collect these biographical anecdotes of the great man under consideration. The facts respecting him were so scattered and vague, and divers of them so questionable in point of authenticity, that I have had to give up the search after many, and decline the admission of still more, which would have tended to heighten the coloring of his portrait.

I have been the more anxious to delineate fully the person and habits of Wouter Van Twiller, from the consideration that he was not only the first, but also the best governor that ever presided over this ancient and respectable province; and so tranquil and benevolent was his reign, that I do not find throughout the whole of it a single instance of any offender being brought to punishment,—a most indubitable sign of a merciful governor, and a case unparalleled, excepting in the reign of the illustrious King Log,[11] from whom, it is hinted, the renowned Van Twiller was a lineal descendant.

The very outset of the career of this excellent magistrate was distinguished by an example of legal acumen that gave flattering presage of a wise and equitable administration. The morning after he had been installed in office, and at the moment that he was making his breakfast from a prodigious earthen dish filled with milk and Indian pudding, he was interrupted by the appearance of Wandle Schoonhoven, a very important old burgher of New Amsterdam, who complained bitterly of one Barent Bleecker, inasmuch as he refused to come to a settlement of accounts, seeing that there was a heavy balance in favor of the said Wandle. Governor Van Twiller, as I have already observed, was a man of few words; he was likewise a mortal enemy to multiplying writings—or being disturbed at his breakfast. Having listened attentively to the statement of Wandle Schoonhoven, giving an occasional grunt as he shoveled a spoonful of Indian pudding into his mouth,—either as a sign that he relished the dish, or comprehended the story,—he called unto him his constable, and pulling out of his breeches-pocket a huge jack-knife, dispatched it after the defendant as a summons, accompanied by his tobacco-box as a warrant.

This summary process was as effectual in those simple days as was the seal-ring of the great Haroun Alraschid[12] among the true believers. The two parties being confronted before him, each produced a book of accounts, written in a language and character that would have puzzled any but a High-Dutch commentator, or a learned decipherer of Egyptian obelisks. The sage Wouter took them one after the other, and having poised them in his hands, and attentively counted over the number of leaves, fell straightway into a very great doubt, and smoked for half an hour without saying a word; at length, laying his finger beside his nose, and shutting his eyes for a moment, with the air of a man who has just caught a subtle idea by the tail, he slowly took his pipe from his mouth, puffed forth a column of tobacco smoke, and with marvelous gravity and solemnity pronounced, that, having carefully counted over the leaves and weighed the books, it was found, that one was just as thick and as heavy as the other: therefore, it was the final opinion of the court that the accounts were equally balanced: therefore, Wandle should give Barent a receipt, and Barent should give Wandle a receipt, and the constable should pay the costs.

This decision, being straightway made known, diffused general joy throughout New Amsterdam, for the people immediately perceived that they had a very wise and equitable magistrate to rule over them. But its happiest effect was, that not another lawsuit took place throughout the whole of his administration; and the office of constable fell into such decay, that there was not one of those losel scouts[13] known in the province for many years. I am the more particular in dwelling on this transaction, not only because I deem it one of the most sage and righteous judgments on record, and well worthy the attention of modern magistrates, but because it was a miraculous event in the history of the renowned Wouter—being the only time he was ever known to come to a decision in the whole course of his life.

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[10] governor

[11] A phlegmatic monarch; from the story of Æsop that the frogs, wishing a king, were given by Jove a log of wood. When they complained, they were given for monarch a stork who ate them up.

[12] Or "Aaron the Just," a celebrated Calif of Bagdad of the eighth century, well known through the *Arabian Nights*.

Chapter II

Containing some account of the grand council of New Amsterdam, as also divers especial good philosophical reasons why an alderman should be fat—with other particulars touching the state of the province.

In treating of the early governors of the province, I must caution my readers against confounding them, in point of dignity and power, with those worthy gentlemen who are whimsically denominated governors in this enlightened republic,—a set of unhappy victims of popularity, who are, in fact, the most dependent, henpecked beings in the community; doomed to bear the secret goadings and corrections of their own party, and the sneers and revilings of the whole world beside; set up, like geese at Christmas holidays, to be pelted and shot at by every whipster and vagabond in the land. On the contrary, the Dutch governors enjoyed that uncontrolled authority vested in all commanders of distant colonies or territories. They were, in a manner, absolute despots in their little domains, lording it, if so disposed, over both law and gospel, and accountable to none but the mother-country; which it is well known is astonishingly deaf to all complaints against its governors, provided they discharge the main duty of their station—squeezing out a good revenue. This hint will be of importance, to prevent my readers from being seized with doubt and incredulity, whenever, in the course of this authentic history, they encounter the uncommon circumstance of a governor acting with independence, and in opposition to the opinions of the multitude.

To assist the doubtful Wouter in the arduous business of legislation, a board of magistrates was appointed, which presided immediately over the police. This potent body consisted of a schout or bailiff, with powers between those of the present mayor and sheriff; five burgermeesters, who were equivalent to aldermen; and five schepens, who officiated as scrubs, subdevils, or bottle-holders to the burgermeesters, in the same manner as do assistant aldermen to their principals at the present day,—it being their duty to fill the pipes of the lordly burgermeesters, hunt the markets for delicacies for corporation dinners, and to discharge such other little offices of kindness as were occasionally required. It was, moreover, tacitly understood, though not specifically enjoined, that they should consider themselves as butts for the blunt wits of the burgermeesters, and should laugh most heartily at all their jokes; but this last was a duty as rarely called in action in those days as it is at present, and was shortly remitted, in consequence of the tragical death of a fat little schepen, who actually died of suffocation in an unsuccessful effort to force a laugh at one of burgermeester Van Zandt's best jokes.

In return for these humble services, they were permitted to say *yes* and *no* at the council-board, and to have that enviable privilege, the run of the public kitchen,—being graciously permitted to eat, and drink, and smoke, at all those snug junketings and public gormandizings for which the ancient magistrates were equally famous with their modern successors. The post of schepen, therefore, like that of assistant alderman, was eagerly coveted by all your burghers of a certain description, who have a huge relish for good feeding, and an humble ambition to be great men in a small way,—who thirst after a little brief authority, that shall render them the terror of the alms-house and the bridewell,[14]—that shall enable them to lord it over obsequious poverty, vagrant vice, outcast prostitution, and hunger-driven dishonesty,—that shall give to their beck a houndlike pack of catchpolls and bumbailiffs[15]—tenfold greater rogues than the culprits they hunt down! My readers will excuse this sudden warmth, which I confess is unbecoming of a grave historian,—but I have a mortal antipathy to catchpolls, bumbailiffs, and little-great men.

The ancient magistrates of this city corresponded with those of the present time no less in form, magnitude, and intellect, than in prerogative and privilege. The burgomasters, like our aldermen, were generally chosen by weight,—and not only the weight of the body, but likewise the weight of the head. It is a maxim practically observed in all honest, plain-thinking, regular cities, that an alderman should be fat,—and the wisdom of this can be proved to a certainty. That the body is in some measure an image of the mind, or rather that the mind is molded to the body, like melted lead to the clay in which it is cast, has been insisted on by many philosophers, who have made human nature their peculiar study; for, as a learned gentleman of our own city observes, "there is a constant relation between the moral character of all intelligent creatures and their physical constitution, between their habits and the structure of their bodies." Thus we see that a lean, spare, diminutive body is generally accompanied by a petulant, restless, meddling mind: either the mind wears down the body, by its continual motion, or else the body, not affording the mind sufficient house-room, keeps it continually in a state of fretfulness, tossing and worrying about from the uneasiness of its situation. Whereas your round, sleek, fat, unwieldy periphery[16] is ever attended by a mind like itself, tranquil, torpid, and at ease; and we may always observe, that your well-fed, robustious[17] burghers are in general very tenacious of their ease and comfort, being great enemies to noise, discord, and disturbance,—and surely none are more likely to study the public tranquillity than those who are so careful of their own. Who ever hears of fat men heading a riot, or herding together in turbulent mobs?—no—no; it is your lean, hungry men who are continually worrying society, and setting the whole community by the ears.

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[13] worthless sleuths

[14] The Bridewell prison, named from St. Bride's Well or spring near by, was a famous jail of London.

[15] Contemptuous terms for sheriffs' officers, constables.

The divine Plato,[18] whose doctrines are not sufficiently attended to by philosophers of the present age, allows to every man three souls: one, immortal and rational, seated in the brain, that it may overlook and regulate the body; a second, consisting of the surly and irascible passions which, like belligerent powers, lie encamped around the heart; a third, mortal and sensual, destitute of reason, gross and brutal in its propensities, and enchained in the belly, that it may not disturb the divine soul by its ravenous howlings. Now, according to this excellent theory, what can be more clear than that your fat alderman is most likely to have the most regular and well-conditioned mind. His head is like a huge spherical chamber, containing a prodigious mass of soft brains, whereon the rational soul lies softly and snugly couched, as on a feather-bed; and the eyes, which are the windows of the bed-chamber, are usually half closed, that its slumberings may not be disturbed by external objects. A mind thus comfortably lodged, and protected from disturbance, is manifestly most likely to perform its functions with regularity and ease. By dint of good feeding, moreover, the mortal and malignant soul, which is confined in the belly, and which, by its raging and roaring, puts the irritable soul in the neighborhood of the heart in an intolerable passion, and thus renders men crusty and quarrelsome when hungry, is completely pacified, silenced, and put to rest,—whereupon a host of honest, good-fellow qualities, and kind-hearted affections, which had lain perdu,[19] slyly peeping out of the loop-holes of the heart, finding this Cerberus[20] asleep, do pluck up their spirits, turn out one and all in their holiday suits, and gambol up and down the diaphragm,—disposing their possessor to laughter, good-humor, and a thousand friendly offices towards his fellow-mortals.

As a board of magistrates, formed on this principle, think but very little, they are the less likely to differ and wrangle about favorite opinions; and as they generally transact business upon a hearty dinner, they are naturally disposed to be lenient and indulgent in the administration of their duties. Charlemagne was conscious of this, and therefore ordered in his cartularies,[21] that no judge should hold a court of justice, except in the morning, on an empty stomach.—A pitiful rule, which I can never forgive, and which I warrant bore hard upon all the poor culprits in the kingdom. The more enlightened and humane generation of the present day have taken an opposite course, and have so managed that the aldermen are the best-fed men in the community; feasting lustily on the fat things of the land, and gorging so heartily on oysters and turtles, that in process of time they acquire the activity of the one, and the form, the waddle, and the green fat of the other. The consequence is, as I have just said, these luxurious feastings do produce such a dulcet equanimity and repose of the soul, rational and irrational, that their transactions are proverbial for unvarying monotony; and the profound laws which they enact in their dozing moments, amid the labors of digestion, are quietly suffered to remain as dead letters, and never enforced when awake. In a word, your fair, round-bellied burgomaster, like a full-fed mastiff, dozes quietly at the house-door, always at home, and always at hand to watch over its safety; but as to electing a lean, meddling candidate to the office, as has now and then been done, I would as lief put a greyhound to watch the house, or a race-horse to draw an ox-wagon.

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[16] circumference

[17] robust (rather than boisterous and violent, the usual meaning)

[18] In the *Phædrus.*

[19] lost to sight, hidden

[20] The watch-dog of the infernal regions.

[21] records (here used as if law codes)

The burgomasters, then, as I have already mentioned, were wisely chosen by weight, and the schepens, or assistant aldermen, were appointed to attend upon them and help them eat; but the latter, in the course of time, when they had been fed and fattened into sufficient bulk of body and drowsiness of brain, became very eligible candidates for the burgomasters' chairs, having fairly eaten themselves into office, as a mouse eats his way into a comfortable lodgment in a goodly, blue-nosed, skimmed-milk, New England cheese.

Nothing could equal the profound deliberations that took place between the renowned Wouter and these his worthy compeers, unless it be the sage divans[22] of some of our modern corporations. They would sit for hours, smoking and dozing over public affairs, without speaking a word to interrupt that perfect stillness so necessary to deep reflection. Under the sober sway of Wouter Van Twiller and these his worthy coadjutors, the infant settlement waxed vigorous apace, gradually emerging from the swamps and forests, and exhibiting that mingled appearance of town and country, customary in new cities, and which at this day may be witnessed in the city of Washington,—that immense metropolis, which makes so glorious an appearance on paper.[23]

It was a pleasing sight, in those times, to behold the honest burgher, like a patriarch of yore, seated on the bench at the door of his whitewashed house, under the shade of some gigantic sycamore or overhanging willow. Here would he smoke his pipe of a sultry afternoon, enjoying the soft southern breeze, and listening with silent gratulation to the clucking of his hens, the cackling of his geese, and the sonorous grunting of his swine,—that combination of farmyard melody which may truly be said to have a silver sound, inasmuch as it conveys a certain assurance of profitable marketing.

The modern spectator, who wanders through the streets of this populous city, can scarcely form an idea of the different appearance they presented in the primitive days of the Doubter. The busy hum of multitudes, the shouts of revelry, the rumbling equipages of fashion, the rattling of accursed carts, and all the spirit-grieving sounds of brawling commerce, were unknown in the settlement of New Amsterdam. The grass grew quietly in the highways; the bleating sheep and frolicsome calves sported about the verdant ridge where now the Broadway loungers take their morning stroll; the cunning fox or ravenous wolf skulked in the woods where now are to be seen the dens of Gomez[24] and his righteous fraternity of money-brokers; and flocks of vociferous geese cackled about the fields where now the great Tammany wigwam[25] and the patriotic tavern of Martling[26] echo with the wranglings of the mob.

In these good times did a true and enviable equality of rank and property prevail, equally removed from the arrogance of wealth, and the servility and heart-burnings of repining poverty; and, what in my mind is still more conducive to tranquillity and harmony among friends, a happy equality of intellect was likewise to be seen. The minds of the good burghers of New Amsterdam seemed all to have been cast in one mold, and to be those honest, blunt minds, which, like certain manufactures, are made by the gross, and considered as exceedingly good for common use.

Thus it happens that your true dull minds are generally preferred for public employ, and especially promoted to city honors; your keen intellects, like razors, being considered too sharp for common service. I know that it is common to rail at the unequal distribution of riches, as the great source of jealousies, broils, and heart-breakings; whereas, for my part, I verily believe it is the sad inequality of intellect that prevails, that embroils communities more than anything else; and I have remarked that your knowing people, who are so much wiser than anybody else, are eternally keeping society in a ferment. Happily for New Amsterdam, nothing of the kind was known within its walls; the very words of learning, education, taste, and talents were unheard of; a bright genius was an animal unknown, and a blue-stocking lady[27] would have been regarded with as much wonder as a horned frog or a fiery dragon. No man, in fact, seemed to know more than his neighbor, nor any man to know more than an honest man ought to know, who has nobody's business to mind but his own; the parson and the council clerk were the only men that could read in the community, and the sage Van Twiller always signed his name with a cross.

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[22] Turkish, diwan; council of state.

[23] When the *History* was published, jealousy was still rife between New York, the first capital under the Constitution, and Washington, which had been the seat of government but nine years.

[24] Probably a money lender.

[25] The home of the ostensibly fraternal and benevolent order of the Tammany Society or Columbian Order, an organization already in 1809 of much political influence in the party holding views opposite to those of Irving.

[26] Landlord of the tavern at the corner of Nassau and Spruce Streets, New York, where the Tammany political meetings were held.

Thrice happy and ever to be envied little Burgh! existing in all the security of harmless insignificance,—unnoticed and unenvied by the world, without ambition, without vainglory, without riches, without learning, and all their train of carking cares;—and as of yore, in the better days of man, the deities were wont to visit him on earth and bless his rural habitations; so, we are told, in the sylvan days of New Amsterdam, the good St. Nicholas[28] would often make his appearance in his beloved city, of a holiday afternoon, riding jollily among the tree-tops, or over the roofs of the houses, now and then drawing forth magnificent presents from his breeches pockets, and dropping them down the chimneys of his favorites. Whereas, in these degenerate days of iron and brass, he never shows us the light of his countenance, nor ever visits us, save one night in the year, when he rattles down the chimneys of the descendants of patriarchs, confining his presents merely to the children, in token of the degeneracy of the parents.

Such are the comfortable and thriving effects of a fat government. The province of the New Netherlands, destitute of wealth, possessed a sweet tranquillity that wealth could never purchase. There were neither public commotions, nor private quarrels; neither parties, nor sects, nor schisms; neither persecutions, nor trials, nor punishments; nor were there counselors, attorneys, catchpolls, or hangmen. Every man attended to what little business he was lucky enough to have, or neglected it if he pleased, without asking the opinion of his neighbor. In those days nobody meddled with concerns above his comprehension; nor thrust his nose into other people's affairs; nor neglected to correct his own conduct, and reform his own character, in his zeal to pull to pieces the characters of others;—but, in a word, every respectable citizen ate when he was not hungry, drank when he was not thirsty, and went regularly to bed when the sun set and the fowls went to roost, whether he was sleepy or not; all which tended so remarkably to the population of the settlement, that I am told every dutiful wife throughout New Amsterdam made a point of enriching her husband with at least one child a year, and very often a brace,—this superabundance of good things clearly constituting the true luxury of life, according to the favorite Dutch maxim, that, "more than enough constitutes a feast." Everything, therefore, went on exactly as it should do, and in the usual words employed by historians to express the welfare of a country, "the profoundest *tranquillity* and *repose* reigned throughout the province."

CHAPTER IX

How the Fort Goed Hoop was fearfully beleaguered—how the renowned Wouter fell into a profound doubt, and how he finally evaporated.

. . . .

I have already noticed, in a former chapter of my history, that the territories of the Nieuw Nederlandts extended on the east, quite to the Varsche or fresh, or Connecticut river. Here, at an early period, had been established a frontier post on the bank of the river, and called Fort Goed Hoop, not far from the site of the present fair city of Hartford. It was placed under the command of Jacobus Van Curlet, or Curlis, as some historians will have it,—a doughty soldier, of that stomachful class famous for eating all they kill. He was long in the body and short in the limb, as though a tall man's body had been mounted on a little man's legs. He made up for this turnspit construction by striding to such an extent that you would have sworn he had on the seven-leagued boots of Jack the Giant-killer; and so high did he tread on parade, that his soldiers were sometimes alarmed lest he should trample himself under foot.

But notwithstanding the erection of this fort and the appointment of this ugly little man of war as commander, the Yankees continued the interlopings hinted at in my last chapter, and at length had the audacity to *squat* themselves down within the jurisdiction of Fort Goed Hoop.[29]

The long-bodied Van Curlet protested with great spirit against these unwarrantable encroachments, couching his protest in Low Dutch, by way of inspiring more terror, and forthwith dispatched a copy of the protest to the governor at New Amsterdam, together with a long and bitter account of the aggressions of the enemy. This done, he ordered his men, one and all, to be of good cheer, shut the gate of the fort, smoked three pipes, went to bed, and awaited the result with a resolute and intrepid tranquillity that greatly animated his adherents, and no doubt struck sore dismay and affright into the hearts of the enemy.

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[27] A woman of intellectual ambition.

[28] Irving has previously made him the patron saint of New York.

[29] The paragraph is substantially true historically.

Now it came to pass that about this time the renowned Wouter Van Twiller, full of years and honors, and council-dinners, had reached that period of life and faculty which, according to the great Gulliver, entitles a man to admission into the ancient order of Struldbruggs.[30] He employed his time in smoking his Turkish pipe, amid an assemblage of sages, equally enlightened and nearly as venerable as himself, and who, for their silence, their gravity, their wisdom, and their cautious averseness to coming to any conclusion in business, are only to be equaled by certain profound corporations which I have known in my time. Upon reading the protest of the gallant Jacobus Van Curlet, therefore, His Excellency fell straightway into one of the deepest doubts that ever he was known to encounter; his capacious head gradually drooped on his chest, he closed his eyes, and inclined his ear to one side, as if listening with great attention to the discussion that was going on in his belly,—and which all who knew him declared to be the huge court-house or council-chamber of his thoughts, forming to his head what the House of Representatives does to the Senate. An inarticulate sound, very much resembling a snore, occasionally escaped him; but the nature of this internal cogitation was never known, as he never opened his lips on the subject to man, woman, or child. In the mean time, the protest of Van Curlet lay quietly on the table, where it served to light the pipes of the venerable sages assembled in council; and in the great smoke which they raised, the gallant Jacobus, his protest, and his mighty Fort Goed Hoop were soon as completely beclouded and forgotten as is a question of emergency swallowed up in the speeches and resolutions of a modern session of Congress.

There are certain emergencies when your profound legislators and sage deliberative councils are mightily in the way of a nation, and when an ounce of hare-brained decision is worth a pound of sage doubt and cautious discussion. Such, at least, was the case at present; for, while the renowned Wouter Van Twiller was daily battling with his doubts, and his resolution growing weaker and weaker in the contest, the enemy pushed farther and farther into his territories, and assumed a most formidable appearance in the neighborhood of Fort Goed Hoop. Here they founded the mighty town of Pyquag, or, as it has since been called, Weathersfield, a place which, if we may credit the assertions of that worthy historian, John Josselyn, Gent.,[31] "hath been infamous by reason of the witches therein." And so daring did these men of Pyquag become, that they extended those plantations of onions, for which their town is illustrious, under the very noses of the garrison of Fort Goed Hoop, insomuch that the honest Dutchmen could not look toward that quarter without tears in their eyes.

This crying injustice was regarded with proper indignation by the gallant Jacobus Van Curlet. He absolutely trembled with the violence of his choler and the exacerbations[32] of his valor, which were the more turbulent in their workings from the length of the body in which they were agitated. He forthwith proceeded to strengthen his redoubts, heighten his breastworks, deepen his fosse,[33] and fortify his position with a double row of abatis;[34] after which he dispatched a fresh courier with accounts of his perilous situation.

The courier chosen to bear the despatches was a fat, oily, little man, as being less liable to be worn out, or to lose leather on the journey; and to insure his speed, he was mounted on the fleetest wagon-horse in the garrison, remarkable for length of limb, largeness of bone, and hardness of trot, and so tall, that the little messenger was obliged to climb on his back by means of his tail and crupper. Such extraordinary speed did he make, that he arrived at Fort Amsterdam in a little less than a month, though the distance was full two hundred pipes, or about one hundred and twenty miles.

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[30] In the third part of *Gulliver's Travels*, beings gifted with bodily immortality, but incapable, through old age, of anything but bodily existence.

[31] John Josselyn, born in England about 1600, wrote three books giving accounts of early voyages to New England, and descriptions of the country.

[32] irritations, exasperations

[33] ditch, moat

[34] A military defense of stakes or tree-tops planted in the earth with sharpened ends protruding toward the enemy.

With an appearance of great hurry and business, and smoking a short traveling-pipe, he proceeded on a long swing-trot through the muddy lanes of the metropolis, demolishing whole batches of dirt-pies which the little Dutch children were making in the road; and for which kind of pastry the children of this city have ever been famous. On arriving at the governor's house, he climbed down from his steed, roused the gray-headed door-keeper, old Skaats, who, like his lineal descendant and faithful representative, the venerable crier of our court, was nodding at his post, rattled at the door of the council-chamber, and startled the members as they were dozing over a plan for establishing a public market.

At that very moment a gentle grunt, or rather a deep-drawn snore, was heard from the chair of the governor; a whiff of smoke was at the same instant observed to escape from his lips, and a light cloud to ascend from the bowl of his pipe. The council, of course, supposed him engaged in deep sleep, for the good of the community, and according to custom in all such cases established, every man bawled out silence, when, of a sudden, the door flew open, and the little courier straddled into the apartment, cased to the middle in a pair of Hessian boots, which he had got into for the sake of expedition. In his right hand he held forth the ominous dispatches, and with his left he grasped firmly the waistband of his galligaskins,[35] which had unfortunately given way in the exertion of descending from his horse. He stumped resolutely up to the governor, and with more hurry than perspicuity delivered his message. But fortunately his ill tidings came too late to ruffle the tranquillity of this most tranquil of rulers. His venerable Excellency had just breathed and smoked his last,—his lungs and his pipe having been exhausted together, and his peaceful soul having escaped in the last whiff that curled from his tobacco pipe. In a word, the renowned Walter the Doubter, who had so often slumbered with his contemporaries, now slept with his fathers, and Wilhelmus Kieft[36] governed in his stead.

1808-09 1809

From THE SKETCH-BOOK

THE AUTHOR'S ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF

> I am of this mind with Homer, that as the snaile that crept out of her shel was turned eftsoons into a toad, and thereby was forced to make a stoole to sit on; so the traveller that stragleth from his owne country is in a short time transformed into so monstrous a shape, that he is faine to alter his mansion with his manners, and to live where he can, not where he would.
>
> LYLY'S *Euphues.*

I was always fond of visiting new scenes, and observing strange characters and manners. Even when a mere child I began my travels, and made many tours of discovery into foreign parts and unknown regions of my native city, to the frequent alarm of my parents, and the emolument of the town-crier. As I grew into boyhood, I extended the range of my observations. My holiday afternoons were spent in rambles about the surrounding country. I made myself familiar with all its places famous in history or fable. I knew every spot where a murder or robbery had been committed, or a ghost seen. I visited the neighboring villages, and added greatly to my stock of knowledge by noting their habits and customs, and conversing with their sages and great men. I even journeyed one long summer's day to the summit of the most distant hill, whence I stretched my eye over many a mile of *terra incognita,*[1] and was astonished to find how vast a globe I inhabited.

This rambling propensity strengthened with my years. Books of voyages and travels became my passion, and in devouring their contents, I neglected the regular exercises of the school. How wistfully would I wander about the pier-heads in fine weather, and watch the parting ships, bound to distant climes—with what longing eyes would I gaze after their lessening sails, and waft myself in imagination to the ends of the earth!

Further reading and thinking, though they brought this vague inclination into more reasonable bounds, only served to make it more decided. I visited various parts of my own country; and had I been merely a lover of fine scenery, I should have felt little desire to seek elsewhere its gratification, for on no country have the charms of nature been more prodigally lavished. Her mighty lakes, like oceans of liquid silver; her mountains, with their bright aërial tints; her valleys, teeming with wild fertility; her tremendous cataracts, thundering in their solitudes; her boundless plains, waving with spontaneous verdure; her broad, deep rivers, rolling in solemn silence to the ocean; her trackless forests, where vegetation puts forth all its magnificence; her skies, kindling with the magic of summer clouds and glorious sunshine;—no, never need an American look beyond his own country for the sublime and beautiful of natural scenery.

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[35] loose breeches

[36] Third Dutch governor of New York.

[1] unknown land

But Europe held forth the charms of storied and poetical association. There were to be seen the masterpieces of art, the refinements of highly cultivated society, the quaint peculiarities of ancient and local custom. My native country was full of youthful promise: Europe was rich in the accumulated treasures of age. Her very ruins told the history of times gone by, and every moldering stone was a chronicle. I longed to wander over the scenes of renowned achievement—to tread, as it were, in the footsteps of antiquity—to loiter about the ruined castle—to meditate on the falling tower—to escape, in short, from the commonplace realities of the present, and lose myself among the shadowy grandeurs of the past.

I had, beside all this, an earnest desire to see the great men of the earth. We have, it is true, our great men in America: not a city but has an ample share of them. I have mingled among them in my time, and been almost withered by the shade into which they cast me; for there is nothing so baleful to a small man as the shade of a great one, particularly the great man of a city. But I was anxious to see the great men of Europe; for I had read in the works of various philosophers, that all animals degenerated in America, and man among the number. A great man of Europe, thought I, must therefore be as superior to a great man of America as a peak of the Alps to a highland of the Hudson; and in this idea I was confirmed by observing the comparative importance and swelling magnitude of many English travelers among us, who, I was assured, were very little people in their own country. I will visit this land of wonders, thought I, and see the gigantic race from which I am degenerated.

It has been either my good or evil lot to have my roving passion gratified. I have wandered through different countries, and witnessed many of the shifting scenes of life. I cannot say that I have studied them with the eye of a philosopher; but rather with the sauntering gaze with which humble lovers of the picturesque stroll from the window of one print-shop to another, caught sometimes by the delineations of beauty, sometimes by the distortions of caricature, and sometimes by the loveliness of landscape. As it is the fashion for modern tourists to travel pencil in hand, and bring home their portfolios filled with sketches, I am disposed to get up a few for the entertainment of my friends. When, however, I look over the hints and memorandums I have taken down for the purpose, my heart almost fails me at finding how my idle humor has led me aside from the great objects studied by every regular traveler who would make a book. I fear I shall give equal disappointment with an unlucky landscape painter, who had traveled on the continent, but, following the bent of his vagrant inclination, had sketched in nooks, and corners, and by-places. His sketch-book was accordingly crowded with cottages, and landscapes, and obscure ruins; but he had neglected to paint St. Peter's, or the Coliseum; the cascade of Terni,[2] or the bay of Naples;[3] and had not a single glacier or volcano in his whole collection.

1818-19 1819

RIP VAN WINKLE

A POSTHUMOUS WRITING OF DIEDRICH KNICKERBOCKER[1]

By Woden, God of Saxons,
From whence comes Wensday, that is Wodensday,
Truth is a thing that ever I will keep
Unto thylke day in which I creep into
My sepulcher—

CARTWRIGHT.

[The following Tale was found among the papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker, an old gentleman of New York, who was very curious in the Dutch history of the province, and the manners of the descendants from its primitive settlers. His historical researches, however, did not lie so much among books as among men; for the former are lamentably scanty on his favorite topics; whereas he found the old burghers, and still more their wives, rich in that legendary lore so invaluable to true history. Whenever, therefore, he happened upon a genuine Dutch family, snugly shut up in its low-roofed farmhouse under a spreading sycamore, he looked upon it as a little clasped volume of black-letter,[2] and studied it with the zeal of a book-worm.

The result of all these researches was a history of the province during the reign of the Dutch governors, which he published some years since.

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[2] A series of waterfalls near Terni, Italy, called Cascate delle Marmore. The total fall is nearly six hundred feet.

[3] Considered one of the most beautiful in the world.

[1] Continuing the very transparent fiction of Diedrich Knickerbocker, as author of the tales here printed, as well as of the *History of New York*, Irving takes occasion to disavow any ill-natured intent in the ridicule they contain. Although the staid Dutch aristocracy had taken Irving's freedom with their ancestors somewhat unkindly, his readers in general relished the *History* all the more just because of its satirical flavor; and as he hints, the growing frequency of the name Knickerbocker, not only on biscuits, but in other trade connections, showed the popularity of the vein he was working. Irving is not wholly original in the germ-idea of the twenty years' sleep, for it had appeared in old-world literature several times in the twenty-four hundred years before the nineteenth century; but he adapts the idea completely to the characters and the time of which he writes, making it not only local in scene, but distinctly American in tone.

[2] The print characteristic of fourteenth century Latin manuscripts and books.

There have been various opinions as to the literary character of his work, and, to tell the truth, it is not a whit better than it should be. Its chief merit is its scrupulous accuracy, which indeed was a little questioned on its first appearance, but has since been completely established; and it is now admitted into all historical collections, as a book of unquestionable authority.

The old gentleman died shortly after the publication of his work, and now that he is dead and gone, it cannot do much harm to his memory to say that his time might have been much better employed in weightier labors. He, however, was apt to ride his hobby his own way; and though it did now and then kick up the dust a little in the eyes of his neighbors, and grieve the spirit of some friends, for whom he felt the truest deference and affection; yet his errors and follies are remembered "more in sorrow than in anger," and it begins to be suspected that he never intended to injure or offend. But however his memory may be appreciated by critics, it is still held dear by many folks whose good opinion is well worth having; particularly by certain biscuit-bakers, who have gone so far as to imprint his likeness on their new-year cakes; and have thus given him a chance for immortality, almost equal to the being stamped on a Waterloo Medal or a Queen Anne's Farthing.[3]]

Whoever has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill Mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed, every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but sometimes when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapors about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fairy mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle-roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists in the early times of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant,[4] (may he rest in peace!) and there were some of the houses of the original settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weather-cocks.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten) there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina.[5] He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbor, and an obedient henpecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation; and a curtain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects be considered a tolerable blessing; and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

Certain it is, that he was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighborhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He

[3] Waterloo medals were given regardless of rank to all British survivors of the battle of Waterloo. Queen Anne's farthing was a coin of Queen Anne's reign, supposed to be, but not in fact, excessively rare.

[4] The last Dutch governor of New York.

[5] A Swedish fort on the Delaware captured by the Dutch in 1655 after a bloodless siege.

would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbor, even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone-fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some outdoor work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst-conditioned farm in the neighborhood.

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins,[6] which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and everything he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife; so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house—the only side which, in truth, belongs to a henpecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much henpecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honorable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods—but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village; which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of His Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking listlessly over village gossip, or telling endless sleepy stories about nothing. But it would have been worth any statesman's money to have heard the profound discussions that sometimes took place, when by chance an old newspaper fell into their hands from some passing traveler. How solemnly they would listen to the contents, as drawled out by Derrick Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, a dapper learned little man, who was not to be daunted by the most gigantic word in the dictionary; and how sagely they would deliberate upon public events some months after they had taken place.

The opinions of this junto were completely controlled by Nicholas Vedder, a patriarch of the village, and landlord of the inn, at the door of which he took his seat from morning till night, just moving sufficiently to avoid the sun and keep in the shade of a large tree; so that the neighbors could tell the hour by his movements as accurately as by a sun-dial. It is true he was rarely heard to speak, but smoked his pipe incessantly. His adherents, however (for every great man has his adherents) perfectly understood him, and knew how to gather his opinions. When anything that was read or related displeased him, he was observed to smoke his pipe vehemently, and to send forth short, frequent, and angry puffs; but when pleased, he would inhale the smoke slowly and tranquilly, and emit it in light and placid clouds; and sometimes, taking the pipe from his mouth, and letting the fragrant vapor curl about his nose, would gravely nod his head in token of perfect approbation.

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[6] Large, loose knee-breeches.

From even this stronghold the unlucky Rip was at length routed by his termagant wife, who would suddenly break in upon the tranquillity of the assemblage and call the members all to naught; nor was that august personage, Nicholas Vedder himself, sacred from the daring tongue of this terrible virago, who charged him outright with encouraging her husband in habits of idleness.

Poor Rip was at last reduced almost to despair; and his only alternative, to escape from the labor of the farm and clamor of his wife, was to take gun in hand and stroll away into the woods. Here he would sometimes seat himself at the foot of a tree, and share the contents of his wallet with Wolf, with whom he sympathized as a fellow-sufferer in persecution. "Poor Wolf," he would say, "thy mistress leads thee a dog's life of it; but never mind, my lad, whilst I live thou shalt never want a friend to stand by thee!" Wolf would wag his tail, look wistfully in his master's face, and if dogs can feel pity I verily believe he reciprocated the sentiment with all his heart.

In a long ramble of the kind on a fine autumnal day, Rip had unconsciously scrambled to one of the highest parts of the Kaatskill Mountains. He was after his favorite sport of squirrel shooting, and the still solitudes had echoed and reëchoed with the reports of his gun. Panting and fatigued, he threw himself, late in the afternoon, on a green knoll, covered with mountain herbage, that crowned the brow of a precipice. From an opening between the trees he could overlook all the lower country for many a mile of rich woodland. He saw at a distance the lordly Hudson, far, far below him, moving on its silent but majestic course, with the reflection of a purple cloud, or the sail of a lagging bark, here and there sleeping on its glassy bosom, and at last losing itself in the blue highlands.

On the other side he looked down into a deep mountain glen, wild, lonely, and shagged, the bottom filled with fragments from the impending cliffs, and scarcely lighted by the reflected rays of the setting sun. For some time Rip lay musing on this scene; evening was gradually advancing; the mountains began to throw their long blue shadows over the valleys; he saw that it would be dark long before he could reach the village, and he heaved a heavy sigh when he thought of encountering the terrors of Dame Van Winkle.

As he was about to descend, he heard a voice from a distance, hallooing, "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!" He looked round, but could see nothing but a crow winging its solitary flight across the mountain. He thought his fancy must have deceived him, and turned again to descend, when he heard the same cry ring through the still evening air; "Rip Van Winkle! Rip Van Winkle!"—at the same time Wolf bristled up his back, and giving a low growl, skulked to his master's side, looking fearfully down into the glen. Rip now felt a vague apprehension stealing over him; he looked anxiously in the same direction, and perceived a strange figure slowly toiling up the rocks, and bending under the weight of something he carried on his back. He was surprised to see any human being in this lonely and unfrequented place; but supposing it to be someone of the neighborhood in need of his assistance, he hastened down to yield it.

On nearer approach he was still more surprised at the singularity of the stranger's appearance. He was a short, square-built old fellow, with thick bushy hair, and a grizzled beard. His dress was of the antique Dutch fashion: a cloth jerkin[7] strapped round the waist, several pair of breeches, the outer one of ample volume, decorated with rows of buttons down the sides, and bunches at the knees. He bore on his shoulder a stout keg, that seemed full of liquor, and made signs for Rip to approach and assist him with the load. Though rather shy and distrustful of this new acquaintance, Rip complied with his usual alacrity; and mutually relieving one another, they clambered up a narrow gully, apparently the dry bed of a mountain torrent. As they ascended, Rip every now and then heard long rolling

[7] short coat

peals, like distant thunder, that seemed to issue out of a deep ravine, or rather cleft, between lofty rocks, toward which their rugged path conducted. He paused for an instant, but supposing it to be the muttering of one of those transient thunder-showers which often take place in mountain heights, he proceeded. Passing through the ravine, they came to a hollow, like a small amphitheater, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, over the brinks of which impending trees shot their branches, so that you only caught glimpses of the azure sky and the bright evening cloud. During the whole time Rip and his companion had labored on in silence; for though the former marveled greatly what could be the object of carrying a keg of liquor up this wild mountain, yet there was something strange and incomprehensible about the unknown, that inspired awe and checked familiarity.

On entering the amphitheater, new objects of wonder presented themselves. On a level spot in the center was a company of odd-looking personages playing at ninepins. They were dressed in a quaint outlandish fashion; some wore short doublets,[8] others jerkins, with long knives in their belts, and most of them had enormous breeches of similar style with that of the guide's. Their visages, too, were peculiar: one had a large beard, broad face, and small piggish eyes: the face of another seemed to consist entirely of nose, and was surmounted by a white sugar-loaf hat, set off with a little red cock's tail. They all had beards, of various shapes and colors. There was one who seemed to be the commander. He was a stout old gentleman, with a weather-beaten countenance; he wore a laced doublet, broad belt and hanger,[9] high-crowned hat and feather, red stockings, and high-heeled shoes, with roses in them. The whole group reminded Rip of the figures in an old Flemish painting in the parlor of Dominie Van Shaick, the village parson, and which had been brought over from Holland at the time of the settlement.

What seemed particularly odd to Rip was, that though these folks were evidently amusing themselves, yet they maintained the gravest faces, the most mysterious silence, and were, withal, the most melancholy party of pleasure he had ever witnessed. Nothing interrupted the stillness of the scene but the noise of the balls, which, whenever they were rolled, echoed along the mountains like rumbling peals of thunder.

As Rip and his companion approached them, they suddenly desisted from their play, and stared at him with such fixed, statue-like gaze, and such strange, uncouth, lack-luster countenances, that his heart turned within him, and his knees smote together. His companion now emptied the contents of the keg into large flagons, and made signs to him to wait upon the company. He obeyed with fear and trembling; they quaffed the liquor in profound silence, and then returned to their game.

By degrees Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavor of excellent Hollands.[10] He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another; and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On waking, he found himself on the green knoll whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright, sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft, and breasting the pure mountain breeze. "Surely," thought Rip, "I have not slept here all night." He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the woe-begone party at ninepins—the flagon—"Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!" thought Rip—"what excuse shall I make to Dame Van Winkle!"

He looked round for his gun, but in place of the clean, well-oiled fowling-piece, he found an old firelock lying by him, the barrel incrusted with rust, the lock falling off, and the stock worm-eaten. He now suspected that the grave roisters of the mountain had put a trick upon him, and, having dosed him with liquor, had robbed him of his gun. Wolf, too, had disappeared, but he might have strayed away after a squirrel or partridge. He whistled after him, and shouted his name, but all in vain; the echoes repeated his whistle and shout, but no dog was to be seen.

He determined to revisit the scene of the last evening's gambol, and if he met with any of the party, to demand his dog and gun. As he rose to walk, he found himself stiff in the joints, and wanting in his usual activity. "These mountain beds do not agree with me," thought Rip, "and if this frolic should lay me up with a fit of the rheumatism, I shall have a blessed time with Dame Van Winkle." With some difficulty he got down into the glen: he found the gully up which he and his companion had ascended the preceding evening; but to his astonishment a mountain stream was now foaming down it, leaping from rock to rock, and filling the glen with babbling murmurs. He, however, made shift to scramble up its sides, working his toilsome way through thickets of birch, sassafras, and witch-hazel, and sometimes tripped up or entangled by the wild grapevines that twisted their coils or tendrils from tree to tree, and spread a kind of network in his path.

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[8] Closely-fitting jackets.

[9] sword

[10] Gin made in Holland.

At length he reached to where the ravine had opened through the cliffs to the amphitheater; but no traces of such opening remained. The rocks presented a high, impenetrable wall, over which the torrent came tumbling in a sheet of feathery foam, and fell into a broad, deep basin, black from the shadows of the surrounding forest. Here, then, poor Rip was brought to a stand. He again called and whistled after his dog; he was only answered by the cawing of a flock of idle crows, sporting high in air about a dry tree that overhung a sunny precipice; and who, secure in their elevation, seemed to look down and scoff at the poor man's perplexities. What was to be done? the morning was passing away, and Rip felt famished for want of his breakfast. He grieved to give up his dog and gun; he dreaded to meet his wife; but it would not do to starve among the mountains. He shook his head, shouldered the rusty firelock, and, with a heart full of trouble and anxiety, turned his steps homeward.

As he approached the village he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with everyone in the country round. Their dress, too, was of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast their eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same, when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long!

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too, not one of which he recognized for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered; it was larger and more populous. There were rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—everything was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but the day before. There stood the Kaatskill Mountains—there ran the silver Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been—Rip was sorely perplexed—"That flagon last night," thought he, "has addled my poor head sadly!"

It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off the hinges. A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed—"My very dog," sighed poor Rip, "has forgotten me!"

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolateness overcame all his connubial fears—he called loudly for his wife and children—the lonely chambers rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn—but it, too, was gone. A large, rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping windows, some of them broken and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, "The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle." Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole, with something on the top that looked like a red night-cap,[11] and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a singular assemblage of stars and stripes—all this was strange and incomprehensible. He recognized on the sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe; but even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held in the hand instead of a scepter, the head was decorated with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.

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[11] The *bonnet rouge*, red cap, an emblem borrowed from the French revolutionists of the most extreme views.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door, but none that Rip recollected. The very character of the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling, disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco smoke instead of idle speeches; or Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper. In place of these, a lean, bilious-looking fellow, with his pockets full of hand bills, was haranguing vehemently about rights of citizens—elections—members of Congress—liberty—Bunker's Hill—heroes of seventy-six—and other words, which were a perfect Babylonish jargon to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long grizzled beard, his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and an army of women and children at his heels, soon attracted the attention of the tavern-politicians. They crowded round him, eyeing him from head to foot with great curiosity. The orator bustled up to him, and, drawing him partly aside, inquired 'on which side he voted?' Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and, rising on tiptoe, inquired in his ear, 'Whether he was Federal or Democrat?' Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, 'what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village?'—"Alas! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the King, God bless him!"

Here a general shout burst from the bystanders—"A tory! a tory! a spy! a refugee! hustle him! away with him!" It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order; and, having assumed a tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit what he came there for, and whom he was seeking? The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbors, who used to keep about the tavern.

"Well—who are they?—name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired, "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin, piping voice, "Nicholas Vedder! why, he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the churchyard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

"Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stony Point—others say he was drowned in a squall at the foot of Antony's Nose.[12] I don't know—he never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the schoolmaster?"

"He went off to the wars too, was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him too, by treating of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war—Congress—Stony Point; he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair, "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

"Oh, Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three, "Oh, to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself, as he went up the mountain: apparently as lazy, and certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name?

"God knows," exclaimed he, at his wit's end; "I'm not myself—I'm somebody else—that's me yonder—no—that's somebody else got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am!"

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[12] A point of land on the Hudson, near West Point.

The bystanders began now to look at each other, nod, wink significantly, and tap their fingers against their foreheads. There was a whisper, also, about securing the gun, and keeping the old fellow from doing mischief, at the very suggestion of which the self-important man in the cocked hat retired with some precipitation. At this critical moment a fresh, comely woman pressed through the throng to get a peep at the gray-bearded man. She had a chubby child in her arms, which, frightened at his looks, began to cry. "Hush, Rip," cried she, "hush, you little fool; the old man won't hurt you." The name of the child, the air of the mother, the tone of her voice, all awakened a train of recollections in his mind. "What is your name, my good woman?" asked he.

"Judith Gardenier."

"And your father's name?"

"Ah, poor man, Rip Van Winkle was his name, but it's twenty years since he went away from home with his gun, and never has been heard of since—his dog came home without him; but whether he shot himself, or was carried away by the Indians, nobody can tell. I was then but a little girl."

Rip had but one question more to ask; but he put it with a faltering voice:—

"Where's your mother?"

"Oh, she too had died but a short time since; she broke a blood-vessel in a fit of passion at a New England peddler."

There was a drop of comfort, at least, in this intelligence. The honest man could contain himself no longer. He caught his daughter and her child in his arms. "I am your father!" cried he—"Young Rip Van Winkle once—old Rip Van Winkle now!—Does nobody know poor Rip Van Winkle?"

All stood amazed, until an old woman, tottering out from among the crowd, put her hand to her brow, and peering under it in his face for a moment, exclaimed, "Sure enough! it is Rip Van Winkle—it is himself! Welcome home again, old neighbor—Why, where have you been these twenty long years?"

Rip's story was soon told, for the whole twenty years had been to him but as one night. The neighbors stared when they heard it; some were seen to wink at each other, and put their tongues in their cheeks; and the self-important man in the cocked hat, who, when the alarm was over, had returned to the field, screwed down the corners of his mouth, and shook his head—upon which there was a general shaking of the head throughout the assemblage.

It was determined, however, to take the opinion of old Peter Vanderdonk, who was seen slowly advancing up the road. He was a descendant of the historian of that name,[13] who wrote one of the earliest accounts of the province. Peter was the most ancient inhabitant of the village, and well versed in all the wonderful events and traditions of the neighborhood. He recollected Rip at once, and corroborated his story in the most satisfactory manner. He assured the company that it was a fact, handed down from his ancestor the historian, that the Kaatskill Mountains had always been haunted by strange beings. That it was affirmed that the great Hendrick Hudson, the first discoverer of the river and country, kept a kind of vigil there every twenty years, with his crew of the *Half-moon;* being permitted in this way to revisit the scenes of his enterprise, and keep a guardian eye upon the river and the great city called by his name.[14] That his father had once seen them in their old Dutch dresses playing at ninepins in a hollow of the mountain; and that he himself had heard, one summer afternoon, the sound of their balls, like distant peals of thunder.

To make a long story short, the company broke up, and returned to the more important concerns of the election. Rip's daughter took him home to live with her; she had a snug well-furnished house, and a stout cheery farmer for a husband, whom Rip recollected for one of the urchins that used to climb upon his back. As to Rip's son and heir, who was the ditto of himself, seen leaning against the tree, he was employed to work on the farm; but evinced an hereditary disposition to attend to anything else but his business.

Rip now resumed his old walks and habits; he soon found many of his former cronies, though all rather the worse for the wear and tear of time; and preferred making friends among the rising generation, with whom he soon grew into great favor.

Having nothing to do at home, and being

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[13] Adrian Van der Donck, a prominent Dutch colonist who died in 1655, wrote a *Description of New Netherland,* a source of authentic information.

[14] The city of Hudson, twenty-eight miles south of Albany, has now only about twelve thousand inhabitants, but may have been relatively much larger in Irving's time. Or, Irving may be joking.

arrived at that happy age when a man can be idle with impunity, he took his place once more on the bench at the inn door, and was reverenced as one of the patriarchs of the village, and a chronicle of the old times "before the war." It was some time before he could get into the regular track of gossip, or could be made to comprehend the strange events that had taken place during his torpor. How that there had been a revolutionary war—that the country had thrown off the yoke of old England—and that, instead of being a subject of His Majesty George the Third, he was now a free citizen of the United States. Rip, in fact, was no politician; the changes of states and empires made but little impression on him; but there was one species of despotism under which he had long groaned, and that was—petticoat government. Happily that was at an end; he had got his neck out of the yoke of matrimony, and could go in and out whenever he pleased, without dreading the tyranny of Dame Van Winkle. Whenever her name was mentioned, however, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and cast up his eyes; which might pass either for an expression of resignation to his fate, or joy at his deliverance.

He used to tell his story to every stranger that arrived at Mr. Doolittle's hotel. He was observed, at first, to vary on some points every time he told it, which was, doubtless, owing to his having so recently awaked. It at last settled down precisely to the tale I have related, and not a man, woman, or child in the neighborhood but knew it by heart. Some always pretended to doubt the reality of it, and insisted that Rip had been out of his head, and that this was one point on which he always remained flighty. The old Dutch inhabitants, however, almost universally gave it full credit. Even to this day they never hear a thunderstorm of a summer afternoon about the Kaatskill, but they say Hendrick Hudson and his crew are at their game of ninepins; and it is a common wish of all henpecked husbands in the neighborhood, when life hangs heavy on their hands, that they might have a quieting draught out of Rip Van Winkle's flagon.

NOTE

The foregoing Tale, one would suspect, had been suggested to Mr. Knickerbocker by a little German superstition about the Emperor Frederick *der Rothbart*,[15] and the Kypphäuser Mountain; the subjoined note, however, which he had appended to the tale, shows that it is an absolute fact, narrated with his usual fidelity:

"The story of Rip Van Winkle may seem incredible to many, but nevertheless I give it my full belief, for I know the vicinity of our old Dutch settlements to have been very subject to marvelous events and appearances. Indeed, I have heard many stranger stories than this, in the villages along the Hudson; all of which were too well authenticated to admit of a doubt. I have even talked with Rip Van Winkle myself, who, when last I saw him, was a very venerable old man, and so perfectly rational and consistent on every other point, that I think no conscientious person could refuse to take this into the bargain; nay, I have seen a certificate on the subject taken before a country justice and signed with a cross, in the justice's own handwriting. The story, therefore, is beyond the possibility of doubt.

"D. K."

POSTSCRIPT

The following are traveling notes from a memorandum-book of Mr. Knickerbocker:

The Kaatsberg, or Catskill Mountains, have always been a region full of fable. The Indians considered them the abode of spirits, who influenced the weather, spreading sunshine or clouds over the landscape, and sending good or bad hunting seasons. They were ruled by an old squaw spirit, said to be their mother. She dwelt on the highest peak of the Catskills, and had charge of the doors of day and night to open and shut them at the proper hour. She hung up the new moons in the skies, and cut up the old ones into stars. In times of drought, if properly propitiated, she would spin light summer clouds out of cobwebs and morning dew, and send them off from the crest of the mountain, flake after flake, like flakes of carded cotton, to float in the air; until, dissolved by the heat of the sun, they would fall in gentle showers, causing the grass to spring, the fruits to ripen, and the corn to grow an inch an hour. If displeased, however, she would brew up clouds black as ink, sitting in the midst of them like a bottle-bellied spider in the midst of its web; and when these clouds broke, woe betide the valleys!

In old times, say the Indian traditions, there was a kind of Manitou or Spirit, who kept about the wildest recesses of the Catskill Mountains, and took a mischievous pleasure in wreaking all kinds of evils and vexations upon the red men. Sometimes he would assume the form of a bear, a panther, or a deer, lead the bewildered hunter a weary chase through tangled forests and among ragged rocks; and then spring off with a loud ho! ho! leaving him aghast on the brink of a beetling precipice or raging torrent.

The favorite abode of this Manitou is still shown. It is a great rock or cliff on the loneliest part of the mountains, and, from the flowering vines which clamber about it, and the wild flowers which abound in its neighborhood, is known by the name of the Garden Rock. Near the foot of it is a small lake, the haunt of the solitary bittern, with water-snakes basking in the sun on the leaves of the pond-lilies which lie on the surface. This place was held in great awe by the Indians, insomuch that the boldest hunter would not pursue his game within its precincts. Once upon a time, however, a hunter, who had lost his way, penetrated to the Garden Rock, where he beheld a number of gourds placed in the crotches of trees. One of these he seized and made off with it, but in the hurry of his retreat he let it fall among the rocks, when a great stream gushed forth, which washed him away and swept him down precipices, where he was dashed to pieces, and the stream made its way to the Hudson, and continues to flow to the present day; being the identical stream known by the name of the Kaaters-kill.

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[15] Frederick Barbarossa (red-beard), 1123-1190, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, according to old legend sits asleep beside a marble table in the interior of the Kyffhäuser Mountain in Thuringia, Germany, surrounded by his knights and awaiting the day when he shall lead the Germans against their enemies.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Saint Francis and Saint Benedight
Blesse this house from wicked wight;
From the night-mare and the goblin,
That is hight good fellow Robin;
Keep it from all evil spirits,
Fairies, weezels, rats, and ferrets:
    From curfew time
    To the next prime.

CARTWRIGHT.

It was a brilliant moonlight night, but extremely cold; our chaise whirled rapidly over the frozen ground; the postboy smacked his whip incessantly, and a part of the time his horses were on a gallop. "He knows where he is going," said my companion,[1] laughing, "and is eager to arrive in time for some of the merriment and good cheer of the servants' hall. My father, you must know, is a bigoted devotee of the old school, and prides himself upon keeping up something of old English hospitality. He is a tolerable specimen of what you will rarely meet with nowadays in its purity, the old English country gentleman; for our men of fortune spend so much of their time in town, and fashion is carried so much into the country, that the strong rich peculiarities of ancient rural life are almost polished away. My father, however, from early years took honest Peacham[2] for his text-book, instead of Chesterfield;[3] he determined in his own mind that there was no condition more truly honorable and enviable than that of a country gentleman on his paternal lands, and therefore passes the whole of his time on his estate. He is a strenuous advocate for the revival of the old rural games and holiday observances, and is deeply read in the writers, ancient and modern, who have treated on the subject. Indeed his favorite range of reading is among the authors who flourished at least two centuries since; who, he insists, wrote and thought more like true Englishmen than any of their successors. He even regrets sometimes that he had not been born a few centuries earlier, when England was itself, and had its peculiar manners and customs. As he lives at some distance from the main road, in rather a lonely part of the country, without any rival gentry near him, he has that most enviable of all blessings to an Englishman, an opportunity of indulging the bent of his own humor without molestation. Being representative of the oldest family in the neighborhood, and a great part of the peasantry being his tenants, he is much looked up to, and, in general, is known simply by the appellation of 'The Squire'; a title which has been accorded to the head of the family since time immemorial. I think it best to give you these hints about my worthy old father, to prepare you for any eccentricities that might otherwise appear absurd."

We had passed for some time along the wall of a park, and at length the chaise stopped at the gate. It was in a heavy magnificent old style, of iron bars, fancifully wrought at top into flourishes and flowers. The huge square columns that supported the gate were surmounted by the family crest. Close adjoining was the porter's lodge, sheltered under dark fir trees, and almost buried in shrubbery.

The postboy rang a large porter's bell, which resounded through the still, frosty air, and was answered by the distant barking of dogs, with which the mansion-house seemed garrisoned. An old woman immediately appeared at the gate. As the moonlight fell strongly upon her, I had a full view of a little primitive dame, dressed very much in the antique taste, with a neat kerchief and stomacher, and her silver hair peeping from under a cap of snowy whiteness. She came courtesying forth, with many expressions of simple joy at seeing her young master. Her husband, it seemed, was up at the house keeping Christmas eve in the servants' hall; they could not do without him, as he was the best hand at a song and story in the household.

My friend proposed that we should alight and walk through the park to the hall, which was at no great distance, while the chaise should follow on. Our road wound through a noble avenue of trees, among the naked branches of which the moon glittered, as she rolled through the deep vault of a cloudless sky. The lawn beyond was sheeted with a slight covering of snow, which here and there sparkled as the moonbeams caught a frosty crystal; and at a distance might be seen a thin transparent vapor, stealing up from the low grounds, and threatening gradually to shroud the landscape.

My companion looked around him with transport: "How often," said he, "have I scampered up this avenue, on returning home on school vacations! How often have I played under these trees when a boy! I feel a degree of filial reverence for them, as we look up to those who have cherished us in childhood. My father was always scrupulous in exacting our holidays, and having us around him on family festivals. He used to direct and superintend our games with the strictness that some parents do the studies of their children. He was very particular that we should play the old English games according to their original form; and consulted old books for precedent and authority for every 'merrie disport'; yet I assure you there never was pedantry so delightful. It was the policy of the good old gentleman to make his children feel that home was the happiest place in the world; and I value this delicious home-feeling as one of the choicest gifts a parent could bestow."

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[1] Irving by chance had met at an inn his former traveling acquaintance, Frank Bracebridge, who had invited him to spend the Christmas at Bracebridge Hall.

[2] Author of *The Complete Gentleman,* 1622.

[3] Philip Stanhope, fourth Earl of Chesterfield, 1694-1773, the "mirror of politeness."

We were interrupted by the clamor of a troop of dogs of all sorts and sizes, "mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound, and curs of low degree,"[4] that, disturbed by the ring of the porter's bell and the rattling of the chaise, came bounding, open-mouthed, across the lawn.

———The little dogs and all,
Tray, Blanch, and Sweetheart, see, they bark at me![5]

cried Bracebridge, laughing. At the sound of his voice, the bark was changed into a yelp of delight, and in a moment he was surrounded and almost overpowered by the caresses of the faithful animals.

We had now come in full view of the old family mansion, partly thrown in deep shadow, and partly lit up by the cool moonshine. It was an irregular building, of some magnitude, and seemed to be of the architecture of different periods. One wing was evidently very ancient, with heavy stone-shafted bow windows jutting out and overrun with ivy, from among the foliage of which the small diamond-shaped panes of glass glittered with the moonbeams. The rest of the house was in the French taste of Charles the Second's time, having been repaired and altered, as my friend told me, by one of his ancestors, who returned with that monarch at the Restoration. The grounds about the house were laid out in the old formal manner of artificial flower-beds, clipped shrubberies, raised terraces, and heavy stone balustrades, ornamented with urns, a leaden statue or two, and a jet of water. The old gentleman, I was told, was extremely careful to preserve this obsolete finery in all its original state. He admired this fashion in gardening; it had an air of magnificence, was courtly and noble, and befitting good old family style. The boasted imitation of nature in modern gardening had sprung up with modern republican notions, but did not suit a monarchical government; it smacked of the leveling system.—I could not help smiling at this introduction of politics into gardening, though I expressed some apprehension that I should find the old gentleman rather intolerant in his creed.—Frank assured me, however, that it was almost the only instance in which he had ever heard his father meddle with politics; and he believed that he had got this notion from a member of Parliament who once passed a few weeks with him. The Squire was glad of any argument to defend his clipped yew-trees and formal terraces, which had been occasionally attacked by modern landscape gardeners.

As we approached the house, we heard the sound of music, and now and then a burst of laughter, from one end of the building. This, Bracebridge said, must proceed from the servants' hall, where a great deal of revelry was permitted, and even encouraged by the Squire, throughout the twelve days of Christmas, provided everything was done conformably to ancient usage. Here were kept up the old games of hoodman blind, shoe the wild mare, hot cockles, steal the white loaf, bob apple, and snap dragon: the Yule clog[6] and Christmas candle were regularly burnt, and the mistletoe, with its white berries, hung up, to the imminent peril of all the pretty housemaids.

So intent were the servants upon their sports that we had to ring repeatedly before we could make ourselves heard. On our arrival being announced, the Squire came out to receive us, accompanied by his two other sons: one a young officer in the army, home on leave of absence; the other an Oxonian, just from the university. The Squire was a fine, healthy-looking old gentleman, with silver hair curling lightly round an open florid countenance; in which the physiognomist, with the advantage, like myself, of a previous hint or two, might discover a singular mixture of whim and benevolence.

The family meeting was warm and affectionate: as the evening was far advanced, the Squire would not permit us to change our traveling dresses, but ushered us at once to the company, which was assembled in a large old-fashioned hall. It was composed of different branches of a numerous family connection, where there were the usual proportion of old uncles and aunts, comfortable married dames, superannuated spinsters, blooming country cousins, half-fledged striplings, and bright-eyed boarding-school hoydens. They were variously occupied: some at a round game of cards; others conversing around the fireplace; at one end of the hall was a group of the young folks, some nearly grown up, others of a more tender and budding age, fully engrossed by a merry game; and a profusion of wooden horses, penny trumpets, and tattered dolls, about the floor, showed traces of a troop of little fairy beings who, having frolicked through a happy day, had been carried off to slumber through a peaceful night.

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[4] From *Elegy on a Mad Dog* in Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*.

[5] Shakspere, *King Lear*, III. vi. 60.

[6] The log which must be kept burning all through Christmas night or ill-luck will come upon the house.

While the mutual greetings were going on between young Bracebridge and his relatives, I had time to scan the apartment. I have called it a hall, for so it had certainly been in old times, and the Squire had evidently endeavored to restore it to something of its primitive state. Over the heavy projecting fireplace was suspended a picture of a warrior in armor, standing by a white horse, and on the opposite wall hung a helmet, buckler, and lance. At one end an enormous pair of antlers were inserted in the wall, the branches serving as hooks on which to suspend hats, whips, and spurs; and in the corners of the apartment were fowling-pieces, fishing-rods, and other sporting implements. The furniture was of the cumbrous workmanship of former days, though some articles of modern convenience had been added, and the oaken floor had been carpeted; so that the whole presented an odd mixture of parlor and hall.

The grate had been removed from the wide overwhelming fireplace, to make way for a fire of wood, in the midst of which was an enormous log glowing and blazing, and sending forth a vast volume of light and heat: this I understood was the Yule clog, which the Squire was particular in having brought in and illumined on a Christmas eve, according to ancient custom.

It was really delightful to see the old Squire seated in his hereditary elbow-chair, by the hospitable fireside of his ancestors, and looking around him like the sun of a system, beaming warmth and gladness to every heart. Even the very dog that lay stretched at his feet, as he lazily shifted his position and yawned, would look fondly up in his master's face, wag his tail against the floor, and stretch himself again to sleep, confident of kindness and protection. There is an emanation from the heart in genuine hospitality which cannot be described, but is immediately felt, and puts the stranger at once at his ease. I had not been seated many minutes by the comfortable hearth of the worthy old cavalier, before I found myself as much at home as if I had been one of the family.

Supper was announced shortly after our arrival. It was served up in a spacious oaken chamber, the panels of which shone with wax, and around which were several family portraits decorated with holly and ivy. Besides the accustomed lights, two great wax tapers, called Christmas candles, wreathed with greens, were placed on a highly-polished beaufet among the family plate. The table was abundantly spread with substantial fare; but the Squire made his supper of frumenty, a dish made of wheatcakes boiled in milk, with rich spices, being a standing dish in old times for Christmas eve.

I was happy to find my old friend, minced pie, in the retinue of the feast; and finding him to be perfectly orthodox, and that I need not be ashamed of my predilection, I greeted him with all the warmth wherewith we usually greet an old and very genteel acquaintance.

The mirth of the company was greatly promoted by the humors of an eccentric personage whom Mr. Bracebridge always addressed with the quaint appellation of Master Simon. He was a tight brisk little man, with the air of an arrant old bachelor. His nose was shaped like the bill of a parrot; his face slightly pitted with the smallpox, with a dry perpetual bloom on it, like a frost-bitten leaf in autumn. He had an eye of great quickness and vivacity, with a drollery and lurking waggery of expression that was irresistible. He was evidently the wit of the family, dealing very much in sly jokes and innuendoes with the ladies, and making infinite merriment by harping upon old themes; which, unfortunately, my ignorance of the family chronicles did not permit me to enjoy. It seemed to be his great delight during supper to keep a young girl next him in a continual agony of stifled laughter, in spite of her awe of the reproving looks of her mother, who sat opposite. Indeed, he was the idol of the younger part of the company, who laughed at everything he said or did, and at every turn of his countenance; I could not wonder at it, for he must have been a miracle of accomplishments in their eyes. He could imitate Punch and Judy; make an old woman of his hand, with the assistance of a burnt cork and pocket-handkerchief;

and cut an orange into such a ludicrous caricature, that the young folks were ready to die with laughing.

I was let briefly into his history by Frank Bracebridge. He was an old bachelor, of a small independent income, which, by careful management, was sufficient for all his wants. He revolved through the family system like a vagrant comet in its orbit; sometimes visiting one branch, and sometimes another quite remote; as is often the case with gentlemen of extensive connections and small fortunes in England. He had a chirping buoyant disposition, always enjoying the present moment; and his frequent change of scene and company prevented his acquiring those rusty unaccommodating habits, with which old bachelors are so uncharitably charged. He was a complete family chronicle, being versed in the genealogy, history, and intermarriages of the whole house of Bracebridge, which made him a great favorite with the old folks; he was a beau of all the elder ladies and superannuated spinsters, among whom he was habitually considered rather a young fellow, and he was master of the revels among the children; so that there was not a more popular being in the sphere in which he moved than Mr. Simon Bracebridge. Of late years, he had resided almost entirely with the Squire, to whom he had become a factotum, and whom he particularly delighted by jumping with his humor in respect to old times, and by having a scrap of an old song to suit every occasion. We had presently a specimen of his last-mentioned talent; for no sooner was supper removed, and spiced wines and other beverages peculiar to the season introduced, than Master Simon was called on for a good old Christmas song. He bethought himself for a moment, and then, with a sparkle of the eye, and a voice that was by no means bad, excepting that it ran occasionally into a falsetto, like the notes of a split reed, he quavered forth a quaint old ditty.

Now Christmas is come,
Let us beat up the drum,
And call all our neighbors together,
And when they appear,
Let us make them such cheer,
As will keep out the wind an dthe weather, etc.

The supper had disposed everyone to gayety, and an old harper was summoned from the servants' hall, where he had been strumming all the evening, and to all appearance comforting himself with some of the Squire's home-brewed. He was a kind of hanger-on, I was told, of the establishment, and, though ostensibly a resident of the village, was oftener to be found in the Squire's kitchen than his own home, the old gentleman being fond of the sound of "harp in hall."

The dance, like most dances after supper, was a merry one; some of the older folks joined in it, and the Squire himself figured down several couple with a partner, with whom he affirmed he had danced at every Christmas for nearly half a century. Master Simon, who seemed to be a kind of connecting link between the old times and the new, and to be withal a little antiquated in the taste of his accomplishments, evidently piqued himself on his dancing, and was endeavoring to gain credit by the heel and toe, rigadoon, and other graces of the ancient school; but he had unluckily assorted himself with a little romping girl from boarding-school, who, by her wild vivacity, kept him continually on the stretch, and defeated all his sober attempts at elegance:—such are the ill-assorted matches to which antique gentlemen are unfortunately prone!

The young Oxonian, on the contrary, had led out one of his maiden aunts, on whom the rogue played a thousand little knaveries with impunity: he was full of practical jokes, and his delight was to tease his aunts and cousins; yet, like all madcap youngsters, he was a universal favorite among the women. The most interesting couple in the dance was the young officer and a ward of the Squire's, a beautiful blushing girl of seventeen. From several shy glances which I had noticed in the course of the evening, I suspected there was a little kindness growing up between them; and, indeed, the young soldier was just the hero to captivate a romantic girl. He was tall, slender, and handsome, and, like most young British officers of late years, had picked up various small accomplishments on the continent;—he could talk French and Italian—draw landscapes—sing very tolerably—dance divinely; but, above all, he had been wounded at Waterloo:—what girl of seventeen, well read in poetry and romance, could resist such a mirror of chivalry and perfection!

The moment the dance was over, he caught up a guitar and, lolling against the old marble fireplace, in an attitude which I am half inclined to suspect was studied, began the little French air of the Troubadour.[7] The Squire, however, exclaimed against having anything on Christmas eve but good old English; upon which the young minstrel, casting up his eye for a moment, as if in an effort of memory, struck into another strain, and, with a charming air of gallantry, gave Herrick's[8] *Night-piece, to Julia.*

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[7] The Troubadours were poets of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries who used the Langue d'Oc, the language of southern France.

Her eyes the glow-worm lend thee;
The shooting stars attend thee,
  And the elves also,
  Whose little eyes glow
Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

No Will-o'-the-Wisp mislight thee;
Nor snake nor slow-worm bite thee;
  But on, on thy way,
  Not making a stay,
Since ghost there is none to affright thee.

Then let not the dark thee cumber;
What though the moon does slumber,
  The stars of the night
  Will lend thee their light,
Like tapers clear without number.

Then, Julia, let me woo thee,
Thus, thus to come unto me:
  And when I shall meet
  Thy silvery feet,
My soul I'll pour into thee.

The song might or might not have been intended in compliment to the fair Julia, for so I found his partner was called; she, however, was certainly unconscious of any such application, for she never looked at the singer, but kept her eyes cast upon the floor. Her face was suffused, it is true, with a beautiful blush, and there was a gentle heaving of the bosom, but all that was doubtless caused by the exercise of the dance; indeed, so great was her indifference, that she amused herself with plucking to pieces a choice bouquet of hot-house flowers, and by the time the song was concluded the nosegay lay in ruins on the floor.

The party now broke up for the night with the kind-hearted old custom of shaking hands. As I passed through the hall, on my way to my chamber, the dying embers of the Yule clog still sent forth a dusky glow, and had it not been the season when "no spirit dares stir abroad," I should have been half tempted to steal from my room at midnight, and peep whether the fairies might not be at their revels about the hearth.

My chamber was in the old part of the mansion, the ponderous furniture of which might have been fabricated in the days of the giants. The room was paneled with cornices of heavy carved work, in which flowers and grotesque faces were strangely intermingled; and a row of black-looking portraits stared mournfully at me from the walls. The bed was of rich, though faded damask, with a lofty tester, and stood in a niche opposite a bow window. I had scarcely got into bed when a strain of music seemed to break forth in the air just below the window. I listened, and found it proceeded from a band, which I concluded to be the waits[9] from some neighboring village. They went round the house, playing under the windows. I drew aside the curtains to hear them more distinctly. The moonbeams fell through the upper part of the casement, partially lighting up the antiquated apartment. The sounds, as they receded, became more soft and aërial, and seemed to accord with the quiet and moonlight. I listened and listened,—they became more and more tender and remote, and, as they gradually died away, my head sunk upon the pillow, and I fell asleep.

1819

From BRACEBRIDGE HALL

THE STOUT GENTLEMAN[1]

A STAGE-COACH ROMANCE

> I'll cross it though it blast me!
> *Hamlet.*

It was a rainy Sunday in the gloomy month of November. I had been detained, in the course of a journey, by a slight indisposition, from which I was recovering; but was still feverish, and obliged to keep within doors all day, in an inn of the small town of Derby. A wet Sunday in a country inn! —whoever has had the luck to experience one can alone judge of my situation. The rain pattered against the casements; the bells tolled for church with a melancholy sound. I went to the windows in quest of something to amuse the eye; but it seemed as if I had been placed completely out of the reach of all amusement. The windows of my bedroom looked out among tiled roofs and stacks of chimneys, while those of my sitting-room commanded a full view of the stable-yard. I know of nothing more calculated to make a man sick of this world than a stable-yard on a rainy day. The place was littered with wet straw that had been kicked about by travelers and stable-boys. In one corner was a stagnant pool of water, surrounding an island of muck; there were several half-drowned fowls crowded together under a cart, among which was a miserable, crestfallen cock, drenched out of all life and spirit; his drooping tail matted, as it were, into a single feather, along which the water trickled from his back; near the cart was a half-dozing cow, chewing the cud, and standing patiently to be rained on, with wreaths of vapor rising from her reeking hide; a wall-eyed horse, tired of the loneliness of the stable, was poking his spectral head out of a window, with the rain dripping on it from the eaves; an unhappy cur, chained to a dog-house hard by, uttered something, every now and then, between a bark and a yelp; a drab of a kitchen-wench tramped backwards and forwards through the yard in pattens,[2] looking as sulky as the weather itself; everything, in short, was comfortless and forlorn, excepting a crew of hardened ducks, assembled like boon companions round a puddle, and making a riotous noise over their liquor.

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[8] Robert Herrick, 1591-1674, an English poet.

[9] Christmas serenaders.

[1] In *Bracebridge Hall* Irving gives pictures of the country life of England, centering them around an old estate and its long-established family. He says, "A favorite evening pastime at the Hall, and one which the worthy Squire is fond of promoting, is story-telling. . . . One evening the current of anecdotes and stories ran upon mysterious personages that have figured at different times, and filled the world with doubts and conjecture; such as the Wandering Jew, and the Man with the Iron Mask, who tormented the curiosity of all Europe." One of the company tells this rather farcical story, which as Irving, who was quite aware of the ultra-romantic literary tendency of the time, playfully says "has in it all the elements of that mysterious and romantic narrative so greedily sought after at the present day."

I was lonely and listless, and wanted amusement. My room soon became insupportable. I abandoned it, and sought what is technically called the travelers'-room. This is a public room set apart at most inns for the accommodation of a class of wayfarers called travelers, or riders; a kind of commercial knights-errant, who are incessantly scouring the kingdom in gigs, on horseback, or by coach. They are the only successors that I know of at the present day to the knights-errant of yore. They lead the same kind of roving, adventurous life, only changing the lance for a driving-whip, the buckler for a pattern-card, and the coat of mail for an upper Benjamin.[3] Instead of vindicating the charms of peerless beauty, they rove about, spreading the fame and standing of some substantial tradesman, or manufacturer, and are ready at any time to bargain in his name; it being the fashion nowadays to trade, instead of fight, with one another. As the room of the hostel, in the good old fighting-times, would be hung round at night with the armor of way-worn warriors, such as coats of mail, falchions,[4] and yawning helmets, so the travelers'-room is garnished with the harnessing of their successors, with box-coats, whips of all kinds, spurs, gaiters, and oil-cloth covered hats.

I was in hopes of finding some of these worthies to talk with, but was disappointed. There were, indeed, two or three in the room; but I could make nothing of them. One was just finishing his breakfast, quarrelling with his bread and butter, and huffing[5] the waiter; another buttoned on a pair of gaiters, with many execrations at Boots for not having cleaned his shoes well; a third sat drumming on the table with his fingers and looking at the rain as it streamed down the window-glass; they all appeared infected by the weather, and disappeared, one after the other, without exchanging a word.

I sauntered to the window, and stood gazing at the people, picking their way to church, with petticoats hoisted midleg high, and dripping umbrellas. The bell ceased to toll, and the streets became silent. I then amused myself with watching the daughters of a tradesman opposite; who, being confined to the house for fear of wetting their Sunday finery, played off their charms at the front windows, to fascinate the chance tenants of the inn. They at length were summoned away by a vigilant vinegar-faced mother, and I had nothing further from without to amuse me.

What was I to do to pass away the long-lived day? I was sadly nervous and lonely; and everything about an inn seems calculated to make a dull day ten times duller. Old newspapers, smelling of beer and tobacco-smoke, and which I had already read half a dozen times. Good-for-nothing books, that were worse than rainy weather. I bored myself to death with an old volume of the *Lady's Magazine*. I read all the commonplace names of ambitious travelers scrawled on the panes of glass; the eternal families of the Smiths, and the Browns, and the Jacksons, and the Johnsons, and all the other sons; and I deciphered several scraps of fatiguing inn-window poetry which I have met with in all parts of the world.

The day continued lowering and gloomy; the slovenly, ragged, spongy clouds drifted heavily along; there was no variety even in the rain: it was one dull, continued, monotonous patter—patter—patter, excepting that now and then I was enlivened by the idea of a brisk shower, from the rattling of the drops upon a passing umbrella.

It was quite *refreshing* (if I may be allowed a hackneyed phrase of the day) when, in the course of the morning, a horn blew, and a stage-coach whirled through the street, with outside passengers stuck all over it, cowering under cotton umbrellas, and seethed together, and reeking with the steams of wet box-coats and upper Benjamins.

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[2] Clumsy overshoes, generally with thick wooden soles.

[3] overcoat

[4] swords

[5] hectoring

The sound brought out from their lurking-places a crew of vagabond boys and vagabond dogs, and the carroty-headed hostler, and that nondescript animal ycleped[6] Boots, and all the other vagabond race that infest the purlieus of an inn; but the bustle was transient; the coach again whirled on its way; and boy and dog, and hostler and Boots, all slunk back again to their holes; the street again became silent, and the rain continued to rain on. In fact, there was no hope of its clearing up; the barometer pointed to rainy weather; mine hostess's tortoise-shell cat sat by the fire washing her face, and rubbing her paws over her ears; and, on referring to the almanac, I found a direful prediction stretching from the top of the page to the bottom through the whole month, "expect—much—rain—about—this—time!"

I was dreadfully hipped.[7] The hours seemed as if they would never creep by. The very ticking of the clock became irksome. At length the stillness of the house was interrupted by the ringing of a bell. Shortly after I heard the voice of a waiter at the bar: "The stout gentleman in No. 13 wants his breakfast. Tea and bread and butter, with ham and eggs; the eggs not to be too much done."

In such a situation as mine, every incident is of importance. Here was a subject of speculation presented to my mind, and ample exercise for my imagination. I am prone to paint pictures to myself, and on this occasion I had some materials to work upon. Had the guest upstairs been mentioned as Mr. Smith, or Mr. Brown, or Mr. Jackson, or Mr. Johnson, or merely as "the gentleman in No. 13," it would have been a perfect blank to me. I should have thought nothing of it; but "The stout gentleman!"—the very name had something in it of the picturesque. It at once gave the size; it embodied the personage to my mind's eye, and my fancy did the rest.

He was stout, or, as some term it, lusty; in all probability, therefore, he was advanced in life, some people expanding as they grow old. By his breakfasting rather late, and in his own room, he must be a man accustomed to live at his ease, and above the necessity of early rising; no doubt a round, rosy, lusty old gentleman.

There was another violent ringing. The stout gentleman was impatient for his breakfast. He was evidently a man of importance; "well to do in the world"; accustomed to be promptly waited upon; of a keen appetite, and a little cross when hungry; "perhaps," thought I, "he may be some London Alderman; or who knows but he may be a Member of Parliament?"

The breakfast was sent up, and there was a short interval of silence; he was, doubtless, making the tea. Presently there was a violent ringing; and before it could be answered, another ringing still more violent. "Bless me! what a choleric old gentleman!" The waiter came down in a huff. The butter was rancid, the eggs were overdone, the ham was too salt;—the stout gentleman was evidently nice in his eating; one of those who eat and growl, and keep the waiter on the trot, and live in a state militant with the household.

The hostess got into a fume. I should observe that she was a brisk coquettish woman; a little of a shrew, and something of a slammerkin,[8] but very pretty withal; with a nincompoop for a husband, as shrews are apt to have. She rated the servants roundly for their negligence in sending up so bad a breakfast, but said not a word against the stout gentleman; by which I clearly perceived that he must be a man of consequence, entitled to make a noise and to give trouble at a country inn. Other eggs, and ham, and bread and butter were sent up. They appeared to be more graciously received; at least there was no further complaint.

I had not made many turns about the travelers'-room, when there was another ringing. Shortly afterwards there was a stir and an inquest about the house. The stout gentleman wanted the *Times* or the *Chronicle* newspaper. I set him down, therefore, for a Whig;[9] or rather, from his being so absolute and lordly where he had a chance, I suspected him of being a Radical. Hunt,[10] I had heard, was a large man; "who knows," thought I, "but it is Hunt himself!"

My curiosity began to be awakened. I inquired of the waiter who was this stout gentleman that was making all this stir; but I could get no information; nobody seemed to know his name. The landlords of bustling inns seldom trouble their heads about the names or occupations of their transient guests. The color of a coat, the shape or size of the person, is enough to suggest a traveling name. It is either the tall gentleman, or the short gentleman, or the gentleman in black, or the gentleman in snuff-color; or, as in the present instance, the stout gentleman. A designation of the kind once hit on, answers every purpose, and saves all further inquiry.

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[6] called

[7] made melancholy; from hypochondria.

[8] slattern

[9] *The Times* and *The Morning Chronicle* were both leading Liberal papers.

[10] Radicals at this time were much hated and not a little feared. Leigh Hunt had censured the Prince Regent in *The Examiner* newspaper and had been imprisoned for two years.

Rain—rain—rain! pitiless, ceaseless rain! No such thing as putting a foot out of doors, and no occupation nor amusement within. By and by I heard some one walking overhead. It was in the stout gentleman's room. He evidently was a large man by the heaviness of his tread; and an old man from his wearing such creaking soles. "He is doubtless," thought I, "some rich old square-toes of regular habits, and is now taking exercise after breakfast."

I now read all the advertisements of coaches and hotels that were stuck about the mantelpiece. The *Lady's Magazine* had become an abomination to me; it was as tedious as the day itself. I wandered out, not knowing what to do, and ascended again to my room. I had not been there long, when there was a squall from a neighboring bedroom. A door opened and slammed violently; a chamber-maid, that I had remarked for having a ruddy, good-humored face, went down stairs in a violent flurry. The stout gentleman had been rude to her!

This sent a whole host of my deductions to the deuce in a moment. This unknown personage could not be an old gentleman; for old gentlemen are not apt to be so obstreperous to chamber-maids. He could not be a young gentleman; for young gentlemen are not apt to inspire such indignation. He must be a middle-aged man, and confounded ugly into the bargain, or the girl would not have taken the matter in such terrible dudgeon. I confess I was sorely puzzled.

In a few minutes I heard the voice of my landlady. I caught a glance of her as she came tramping up-stairs,—her face glowing, her cap flaring, her tongue wagging the whole way. 'She'd have no such doings in her house, she'd warrant. If gentlemen did spend money freely, it was no rule. She'd have no servant-maids of hers treated in that way, when they were about their work, that's what she wouldn't.'

As I hate squabbles, particularly with women, and above all with pretty women, I slunk back into my room, and partly closed the door; but my curiosity was too much excited not to listen. The landlady marched intrepidly to the enemy's citadel, and entered it with a storm: the door closed after her. I heard her voice in high windy clamor for a moment or two. Then it gradually subsided, like a gust of wind in a garret; then there was a laugh; then I heard nothing more.

After a little while my landlady came out with an odd smile on her face, adjusting her cap, which was a little on one side. As she went down stairs, I heard the landlord ask her what was the matter; she said, "Nothing at all, only the girl's a fool."—I was more than ever perplexed what to make of this unaccountable personage, who could put a good-natured chamber-maid in a passion, and send away a termagant landlady in smiles. He could not be so old, nor cross, nor ugly either.

I had to go to work at his picture again, and to paint him entirely different. I now set him down for one of those stout gentlemen that are frequently met with swaggering about the doors of country inns. Moist, merry fellows, in Belcher handkerchiefs,[11] whose bulk is a little assisted by malt-liquors. Men who have seen the world, and been sworn at Highgate;[12] who are used to tavern-life; up to all the tricks of tapsters,[13] and knowing in the ways of sinful publicans. Free-livers on a small scale; who are prodigal within the compass of a guinea; who call all the waiters by name, tousle the maids, gossip with the landlady at the bar, and prose over a pint of port, or a glass of negus,[14] after dinner.

The morning wore away in forming these and similar surmises. As fast as I wove one system of belief, some movement of the unknown would completely overturn it, and throw all my thoughts again into confusion. Such are the solitary operations of a feverish mind. I was, as I have said, extremely nervous; and the continual meditation on the concerns of this invisible personage began to have its effect:—I was getting a fit of the fidgets.

Dinner-time came. I hoped the stout gentleman might dine in the travelers'-room, and that I might at length get a view of his person; but no—he had dinner served in his own room. What could be the meaning of this solitude and mystery? He could not be a Radical; there was something too aristocratical in thus keeping himself apart from the rest of the world, and condemning himself to his own dull company throughout a rainy day. And then, too, he lived too well for a discontented politician. He seemed to expatiate on a variety of dishes, and to sit over his wine like a jolly friend of good living. Indeed, my doubts on this head were soon at an end; for he could not have finished his first bottle before I could faintly hear him humming a tune; and on listening I found it to be "God save the King." 'Twas plain, then, he was no Radical, but a faithful subject; one who grew loyal over his bottle, and was ready to stand by king and constitution, when he could stand by nothing else. But who could he be? My conjectures began to run wild. Was he not some personage of distinction traveling incog.? "God knows!" said I, at my wit's end; "it may be one of the royal family for aught I know, for they are all stout gentlemen!"

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[11] Dark blue neckerchiefs with white dots, named from Belcher, a pugilist.

[12] In the old stage-coach days ignorant travelers were sometimes gulled at Highgate, just out of London on the old North Road, by being persuaded that before passing through they must be sworn and admitted to the freedom of the town. The fee was a bottle of wine.

[13] bartenders

[14] A kind of punch.

The weather continued rainy. The mysterious unknown kept his room, and, as far as I could judge, his chair, for I did not hear him move. In the mean time, as the day advanced, the travelers'-room began to be frequented. Some, who had just arrived, came in buttoned up in box-coats; others came home who had been dispersed about the town; some took their dinners, and some their tea. Had I been in a different mood, I should have found entertainment in studying this peculiar class of men. There were two especially, who were regular wags of the road, and up to all the standing jokes of travelers. They had a thousand sly things to say to the waiting-maid, whom they called Louisa, and Ethelinda, and a dozen other fine names, changing the name every time, and chuckling amazingly at their own waggery. My mind, however, had been completely engrossed by the stout gentleman. He had kept my fancy in chase during a long day, and it was not now to be diverted from the scent.

The evening gradually wore away. The travelers read the papers two or three times over. Some drew round the fire and told long stories about their horses, about their adventures, their overturns, and breakings-down. They discussed the credit of different merchants and different inns; and the two wags told several choice anecdotes of pretty chamber-maids and kind landladies. All this passed as they were quietly taking what they called their night-caps, that is to say, strong glasses of brandy and water and sugar, or some other mixture of the kind; after which they one after another rang for "Boots" and the chamber-maid, and walked off to bed in old shoes cut down into marvelously uncomfortable slippers.

There was now only one man left: a short-legged, long-bodied, plethoric fellow, with a very large, sandy head. He sat by himself, with a glass of port-wine negus, and a spoon; sipping and stirring, and meditating and sipping, until nothing was left but the spoon. He gradually fell asleep bolt upright in his chair, with the empty glass standing before him; and the candle seemed to fall asleep too, for the wick grew long, and black, and cabbaged at the end, and dimmed the little light that remained in the chamber. The gloom that now prevailed was contagious. Around hung the shapeless, and almost spectral, box-coats of departed travelers, long since buried in deep sleep. I only heard the ticking of the clock, with the deep-drawn breathings of the sleeping topers, and the drippings of the rain, drop—drop—drop, from the eaves of the house. The church-bells chimed midnight. All at once the stout gentleman began to walk overhead, pacing slowly backwards and forwards. There was something extremely awful in all this, especially to one in my state of nerves. These ghastly great-coats, these guttural breathings, and the creaking footsteps of this mysterious being. His steps grew fainter and fainter, and at length died away. I could bear it no longer. I was wound up to the desperation of a hero of romance. "Be he who or what he may," said I to myself, "I'll have a sight of him!" I seized a chamber-candle, and hurried up to No. 13. The door stood ajar. I hesitated—I entered: the room was deserted. There stood a large, broad-bottomed elbow-chair at a table, on which was an empty tumbler, and a *Times* newspaper, and the room smelt powerfully of Stilton cheese.

The mysterious stranger had evidently but just retired. I turned off, sorely disappointed, to my room, which had been changed to the front of the house. As I went along the corridor, I saw a large pair of boots, with dirty, waxed tops, standing at the door of a bedchamber. They doubtless belonged to the unknown; but it would not do to disturb so redoubtable a personage in his den: he might discharge a pistol, or something worse, at my head. I went to bed, therefore, and lay awake half the night in a terribly nervous state; and even when I fell asleep, I was still haunted in my dreams by the idea of the stout gentleman and his wax-topped boots.

I slept rather late the next morning, and was awakened by some stir and bustle in the house, which I could not at first comprehend; until getting more awake, I found there was a mail-coach starting from the door. Suddenly there was a cry from below, "The gentleman has forgot his umbrella! Look for the gentleman's umbrella in No. 13!" I heard an immediate scampering of a chamber-maid along the passage, and a shrill reply as she ran, "Here it is! here's the gentleman's umbrella!"

The mysterious stranger then was on the point of setting off. This was the only chance I should ever have of knowing him. I sprang out of bed, scrambled to the window, snatched aside the curtains, and just caught a glimpse of the rear of a person getting in at the coach-door. The skirts of a brown coat parted behind, and gave me a full view of the broad disk of a pair of drab breeches. The door closed—"all right!" was the word—the coach whirled off;—and that was all I ever saw of the stout gentleman!

1821 1822

From THE ALHAMBRA[1]

From PALACE OF THE ALHAMBRA

To the traveler imbued with a feeling for the historical and poetical, so inseparably intertwined in the annals of romantic Spain, the Alhambra is as much an object of devotion as is the Caaba[2] to all true Moslems. How many legends and traditions, true and fabulous,—how many songs and ballads, Arabian and Spanish, of love and war and chivalry, are associated with this Oriental pile! It was the royal abode of the Moorish kings, where, surrounded with the splendors and refinements of Asiatic luxury, they held dominion over what they vaunted as a terrestrial paradise, and made their last stand for empire in Spain. The royal palace forms but a part of a fortress, the walls of which, studded with towers, stretch irregularly round the whole crest of a hill, a spur of the Sierra Nevada or Snowy Mountains, and overlook the city; externally it is a rude congregation of towers and battlements, with no regularity of plan nor grace of architecture, and giving little promise of the grace and beauty which prevail within.

In the time of the Moors the fortress was capable of containing within its outward precincts an army of forty thousand men, and served occasionally as a stronghold of the sovereigns against their rebellious subjects. After the kingdom had passed into the hands of the Christians, the Alhambra continued to be a royal demesne, and was occasionally inhabited by the Castilian monarchs. The emperor Charles V.[3] commenced a sumptuous palace within its walls, but was deterred from completing it by repeated shocks of earthquakes. The last royal residents were Philip V. and his beautiful queen, Elizabetta of Parma, early in the eighteenth century. Great preparations were made for their reception. The palace and gardens were placed in a state of repair, and a new suite of apartments erected, and decorated by artists brought from Italy. The sojourn of the sovereigns was transient, and after their departure the palace once more became desolate. Still the place was maintained with some military state. The governor held it immediately from the crown; its jurisdiction extended down into the suburbs of the city, and was independent of the captain-general of Granada.[4] A considerable garrison was kept up; the governor had his apartments in the front of the old Moorish palace, and never descended into Granada without some military parade. The fortress, in fact, was a little town of itself, having several streets of houses within its walls, together with a Franciscan convent and a parochial church.

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[1] The Alhambra, a fortress begun by Moorish kings in the twelfth century on a hill overlooking Granada, was the last foodhold of the Moors in Spain, and still stands as the visible emblem of the former Moslem empire in Europe. The Moors entered Spain in the eighth century, quickly overcame the Gothic kingdom of some three centuries' standing and maintained a civilization that in many respects was the most enlightened in medieval Europe. Science, literature, and philosophy were encouraged. From the twelfth century the Moorish power declined until in the fifteenth century Granada, which had attained great influence and splendor, was the only remaining city of the Moors; and this, rent by internal feuds, at length fell to Ferdinand and Isabella in 1492.

Irving, while attaché of the American legation at Madrid, lived during some months of 1829 in the Alhambra, as *The Alhambra* narrates.

[2] The Kaaba at Mecca is the central shrine of Mohammedanism.

[3] Charles V., 1500-1558, grandson of Ferdinand and Isabella, ruler of the Holy Roman Empire, Spain, Netherlands, Mexico, and Peru, was the most powerful monarch of his time in Europe. In 1555 and 1556 he abdicated in favor of his brother Ferdinand, who was crowned emperor, and his son Philip, who took the Netherlands and Spain. His equestrian portrait by Titian is famous.

[4] Chief official of the province of Granada.

The desertion of the court, however, was a fatal blow to the Alhambra. Its beautiful halls became desolate, and some of them fell to ruin; the gardens were destroyed, and the fountains ceased to play. By degrees the dwellings became filled with a loose and lawless population: contrabandistas,[5] who availed themselves of its independent jurisdiction to carry on a wide and daring course of smuggling, and thieves and rogues of all sorts, who made this their place of refuge whence they might depredate upon Granada and its vicinity. The strong arm of government at length interfered; the whole community was thoroughly sifted; none were suffered to remain but such as were of honest character, and had legitimate right to a residence; the greater part of the houses were demolished and a mere hamlet left, with the parochial church and the Franciscan convent. During the recent troubles in Spain, when Granada was in the hands of the French,[6] the Alhambra was garrisoned by their troops, and the palace was occasionally inhabited by the French commander. With that enlightened taste which has ever distinguished the French nation in their conquests, this monument of Moorish elegance and grandeur was rescued from the absolute ruin and desolation that were overwhelming it. The roofs were repaired, the saloons and galleries protected from the weather, the gardens cultivated, the water courses restored, the fountains once more made to throw up their sparkling showers; and Spain may thank her invaders for having preserved to her the most beautiful and interesting of her historical monuments.

On the departure of the French they blew up several towers of the outer wall, and left the fortifications scarcely tenable. Since that time the military importance of the post is at an end. The garrison is a handful of invalid soldiers, whose principal duty is to guard some of the outer towers, which serve occasionally as a prison of state; and the governor, abandoning the lofty hill of the Alhambra, resides in the center of Granada, for the more convenient dispatch of his official duties. I cannot conclude this brief notice of the state of the fortress without bearing testimony to the honorable exertions of its present commander,[7] Don Francisco de Serna, who is tasking all the limited resources at his command to put the palace in a state of repair, and by his judicious precautions has for some time arrested its too certain decay. Had his predecessors discharged the duties of their station with equal fidelity, the Alhambra might yet have remained in almost its pristine beauty; were government to second him with means equal to his zeal, this relic of it might still be preserved for many generations to adorn the land, and attract the curious and enlightened of every clime.

Our first object of course, on the morning after our arrival, was a visit to this time-honored edifice; it has been so often, however, and so minutely described by travelers, that I shall not undertake to give a comprehensive and elaborate account of it, but merely occasional sketches of parts, with the incidents and associations connected with them.

Leaving our *posada*,[8] and traversing the renowned square of the Vivarrambla, once the scene of Moorish jousts and tournaments, now a crowded market-place, we proceeded along the Zacatin, the main street of what, in the time of the Moors, was the Great Bazaar, and where small shops and narrow alleys still retain the Oriental character. Crossing an open place in front of the palace of the captain-general, we ascended a confined and winding street, the name of which reminded us of the chivalric days of Granada. It is called the Calle, or street of the Gomeres, from a Moorish family famous in chronicle and song. This street led up to the Puerta de las Granadas, a massive gateway of Grecian architecture, built by Charles V., forming the entrance to the domains of the Alhambra.

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We now found ourselves in a deep narrow ravine, filled with beautiful groves, with a steep avenue, and various footpaths winding through it, bordered with stone seats, and ornamented with fountains. To our left we beheld the towers of the Alhambra beetling above us; to our right, on the opposite side of the ravine, we were equally dominated by rival towers on a rocky eminence. These, we were told, were the Torres Vermejos, or vermillion towers, so called from their ruddy hue.[9] No one knows their origin. They are of a date much anterior to the Alhambra: some suppose them to have been built by the Romans; others, by some wandering colony of Phoenicians. Ascending the steep and shady avenue, we arrived at the foot of a huge square Moorish tower, forming a kind of barbican,[10] through which passed the main entrance to the fortress. Within the barbican was another group of veteran invalids, one mounting guard at the portal, while the rest, wrapped in their tattered cloaks, slept on the stone benches. This portal is called the Gate of Justice, from the tribunal held within its porch during the Moslem domination, for the immediate trial of petty causes: a custom common to the Oriental nations, and occasionally alluded to in the sacred Scriptures. "Judges and officers shalt thou make thee *in all thy gates,* and they shall judge the people with just judgment."[11]

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[5] smugglers

[6] During the Napoleonic wars.

[7] In 1829.

[8] inn

[9] Alhambra (Arabic *al-hamra'u*) means red.

The great vestibule, or porch of the gate, is formed by an immense Arabian arch, of the horseshoe form, which springs to half the height of the tower. On the keystone of this arch is engraven a gigantic hand. Within the vestibule, on the keystone of the portal, is sculptured, in like manner, a gigantic key. Those who pretend to some knowledge of Mohammedan symbols, affirm that the hand is the emblem of doctrine; the five fingers designating the five principal commandments of the creed of Islam: fasting, pilgrimage, alms-giving, ablution, and war against infidels. The key, say they, is the emblem of the faith or of power; the key of Daoud, or David, transmitted to the prophet. "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none shall open." (*Isaiah* xxii. 22.) The key we are told was emblazoned on the standard of the Moslems in opposition to the Christian emblem of the cross, when they subdued Spain or Andalusia.[12] It betokened the conquering power invested in the prophet. "He that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth." (*Revelation* iii. 7.)

A different explanation of these emblems, however, was given by the legitimate son[13] of the Alhambra, and one more in unison with the notions of the common people, who attach something of mystery and magic to everything Moorish, and have all kinds of superstitions connected with this old Moslem fortress. According to Mateo, it was a tradition handed down from the oldest inhabitants, and which he had from his father and grandfather, that the hand and key were magical devices on which the fate of the Alhambra depended. The Moorish king who built it was a great magician, or, as some believed, had sold himself to the devil, and had laid the whole fortress under a magic spell. By this means it had remained standing for several hundred years, in defiance of storms and earthquakes, while almost all other buildings of the Moors had fallen to ruin and disappeared. This spell, the tradition went on to say, would last until the hand on the outer arch should reach down and grasp the key, when the whole pile would tumble to pieces, and all the treasures buried beneath it by the Moors would be revealed.

Notwithstanding this ominous prediction, we ventured to pass through the spell-bound gateway, feeling some little assurance against magic art in the protection of the Virgin, a statue of whom we observed above the portal.

After passing through the barbican, we ascended a narrow lane, winding between walls, and came on an open esplanade within the fortress, called the Plaza de los Algibes, or Place of the Cisterns, from great reservoirs which undermine it, cut in the living rock by the Moors to receive the water brought by conduits from the Darro, for the supply of the fortress. Here, also, is a well of immense depth, furnishing the purest and coldest of water,—another monument of the delicate taste of the Moors, who were indefatigable in their exertions to obtain that element in its crystal purity.

In front of this esplanade is the splendid pile commenced by Charles V., and intended, it is said, to eclipse the residence of the Moorish kings. Much of the Oriental edifice intended for the winter season was demolished to make way for this massive pile. The grand entrance was blocked up; so that the present entrance to the Moorish palace is through a simple and almost humble portal in a corner. With all the massive grandeur and architectural merit of the palace of Charles V., we regarded it as an arrogant intruder, and passing by it with a feeling almost of scorn, rang at the Moslem portal.

While waiting for admittance, our self-imposed cicerone,[14] Mateo Ximenes, informed us that the royal palace was intrusted to the care of a worthy old maiden dame called Doña Antonia-Molina, but who, according to Spanish custom, went by the more neighborly appellation of Tia Antonia (Aunt Antonia), who maintained the Moorish halls and gardens in order and showed them to strangers. While we were talking, the door was opened by a plump little black-eyed Andalusian damsel, whom Mateo addressed as Dolores, but who from her bright looks and cheerful disposition evidently merited a merrier name.[15] Mateo informed me in a whisper that she was the niece of Tia Antonia, and I found she was the good fairy who was to conduct us through the enchanted palace. Under her guidance we crossed the threshold, and were at once transported, as if by magic wand, into other times and an oriental realm, and were treading the scenes of Arabian story. Nothing could be in greater contrast than the unpromising exterior of the pile with the scene now before us. We found ourselves in a vast patio or court, one hundred and fifty feet in length, and upwards of eighty feet in breadth, paved with white marble, and decorated at each end with light Moorish peristyles,[16] one of which supported an elegant gallery of fretted architecture. Along the moldings of the cornices and on various parts of the walls were escutcheons and ciphers, and cufic[17] and Arabic characters in high relief, repeating the pious mottoes of the Moslem monarchs, the builders of the Alhambra, or extolling their grandeur and munificence. Along the center of the court extended an immense basin or tank (estanque), a hundred and twenty-four feet in length, twenty-seven in breadth, and five in depth, receiving its water from two marble vases. Hence it is called the Court of the Alberca (from al Beerkah, the Arabic for a pond or tank). Great numbers of gold-fish were to be seen gleaming through the waters of the basin, and it was bordered by hedges of roses.

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[10] An outer fortification generally protecting a gateway.

[11] *Deuteronomy* xvi. 18.

[12] Andalusia, or Land of the Vandals, is the chief southern part of Spain.

[13] Mateo, a guide and servant whom Irving employed, born within the old palace and calling himself a legitimate son of the Alhambra.

[14] guide (especially guide to a museum or collection of relics)

Passing from the court of the Alberca under a Moorish archway, we entered the renowned court of Lions. No part of the edifice gives a more complete idea of its original beauty than this, for none has suffered so little from the ravages of time. In the center stands the fountain famous in song and story. The alabaster basins still shed their diamond drops; the twelve lions which support them, and give the court its name, still cast forth crystal streams as in the days of Boabdil.[18] The lions, however, are unworthy of their fame, being of miserable sculpture, the work probably of some Christian captive. The court is laid out in flower-beds, instead of its ancient and appropriate pavement of tiles or marble; the alteration, an instance of bad taste, was made by the French when in possession of Granada. Round the four sides of the court are light Arabian arcades of open filigree work, supported by slender pillars of white marble, which it is supposed were originally gilded. The architecture, like that in most parts of the interior of the palace, is characterized by elegance rather than grandeur, bespeaking a delicate and graceful taste, and a disposition to indolent enjoyment. When one looks upon the fairy traces of the peristyles, and the apparently fragile fretwork of the walls, it is difficult to believe that so much has survived the wear and tear of centuries, the shocks of earthquakes, the violence of war, and the quiet, though no less baneful, pilferings of the tasteful traveler: it is almost sufficient to excuse the popular tradition, that the whole is protected by a magic charm.

On one side of the court a rich portal opens into the Hall of the Abencerrages:[19] so called from the gallant cavaliers of that illustrious line who were here perfidiously massacred. There are some who doubt the whole story, but our humble cicerone Mateo pointed out the very wicket of the portal through which they were introduced one by one into the court of Lions, and the white marble fountain in the center of the hall beside which they were beheaded. He showed us also certain broad ruddy stains on the pavement, traces of their blood, which, according to popular belief, can never be effaced.

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Immediately opposite the hall of the Abencerrages, a portal, richly adorned, leads into a hall of less tragical associations. It is light and lofty, exquisitely graceful in its architecture, paved with white marble, and bears the suggestive name of the Hall of the Two Sisters. Some destroy the romance of the name by attributing it to two enormous slabs of alabaster which lie side by side, and form a great part of the pavement: an opinion strongly supported by Mateo

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[15] Dolores means "grieving."

[16] rows of columns

[17] From Cufa or Kufa, an old city south of Babylon noted for the expertness of its copyists in reproducing manuscripts of the Koran.

[18] Boabdil (called El Chico, the little), was the last Moorish sovereign of Granada.

[19] A Moorish tribal family of Granada in feud with the Zegrys. Its warriors are supposed to have been massacred under King Abu Hassan toward the close of the Moorish dynasty.

Ximenes. Others are disposed to give the name a more poetical significance, as the vague memorial of Moorish beauties who once graced this hall, which was evidently a part of the royal harem. This opinion I was happy to find entertained by our little bright-eyed guide, Dolores, who pointed to a balcony over an inner porch; which gallery, she had been told, belonged to the women's apartment. "You see, señor," said she, "it is all grated and latticed, like the gallery in a convent chapel where the nuns hear mass; for the Moorish kings," added she, indignantly, "shut up their wives just like nuns."

The latticed "jalousies," in fact, still remain, whence the dark-eyed beauties of the harem might gaze unseen upon the zambras[20] and other dances and entertainments of the hall below.

On each side of this hall are recesses or alcoves for ottomans and couches, on which the voluptuous lords of the Alhambra indulged in that dreamy repose so dear to the Orientalists. A cupola or lantern admits a tempered light from above and a free circulation of air; while on one side is heard the refreshing sound of waters from the fountain of the lions, and on the other side the soft plash from the basin in the garden of Lindaraxa.

It is impossible to contemplate this scene, so perfectly Oriental, without feeling the early associations of Arabian romance, and almost expecting to see the white arm of some mysterious princess beckoning from the gallery, or some dark eye sparkling through the lattice. The abode of beauty is here as if it had been inhabited but yesterday; but where are the two sisters, where the Zoraydas and Lindaraxas![21]

An abundant supply of water, brought from the mountains by old Moorish aqueducts, circulates throughout the palace, supplying its baths and fish-pools, sparkling in jets within its halls or murmuring in channels along the marble pavements. When it has paid its tribute to the royal pile, and visited its gardens and parterres, it flows down the long avenue leading to the city, tinkling in rills, gushing in fountains, and maintaining a perpetual verdure in those groves that embower and beautify the whole hill of the Alhambra.

Those only who have sojourned in the ardent climates of the South can appreciate the delights of an abode combining the breezy coolness of the mountain with the freshness and verdure of the valley. While the city below pants with the noontide heat, and the parched Vega[22] trembles to the eye, the delicate airs from the Sierra Nevada play through these lofty halls, bringing with them the sweetness of the surrounding gardens. Everything invites to that indolent repose, the bliss of southern climes; and while the half-shut eye looks out from shaded balconies upon the glittering landscape, the ear is lulled by the rustling of groves and the murmur of running streams.

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From THE HALL OF AMBASSADORS

In one of my visits to the old Moorish chamber where the good Tia Antonia cooks her dinner and receives her company, I observed a mysterious door in one corner, leading apparently into the ancient part of the edifice. My curiosity being aroused, I opened it, and found myself in a narrow, blind corridor, groping along which I came to the head of a dark winding staircase, leading down an angle of the tower of Comares.[23] Down this staircase I descended darkling, guiding myself by the wall, until I came to a small door at the bottom, throwing which open, I was suddenly dazzled by emerging into the brilliant antechamber of the Hall of Ambassadors; with the fountain of the court of the Alberca sparkling before me. The antechamber is separated from the court by an elegant gallery, supported by slender columns with spandrels[24] of open work in the Morisco style. At each end of the antechamber are alcoves, and its ceiling is richly stuccoed and painted. Passing through a magnificent portal, I found myself in the far-famed Hall of Ambassadors, the audience chamber of the Moslem monarchs. It is said to be thirty-seven feet square, and sixty feet high; occupies the whole interior of the Tower of Comares; and still bears the traces of past magnificence. The walls are beautifully stuccoed and decorated with Morisco fancifulness; the lofty ceiling was originally of the same favorite material, with the usual frostwork and pensile[25] ornaments or stalactites; which, with the embellishments of vivid coloring and gilding, must have been gorgeous in the extreme. Unfortunately it gave way during an earthquake, and brought down with it an immense arch which traversed the hall. It was replaced by the present vault or dome of larch or cedar, with intersecting ribs, the whole curiously wrought and richly colored; still Oriental in its character, reminding one of "those ceilings of cedar and vermilion that we read of in the Prophets and the Arabian Nights."

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[20] feasts, merrymakings

[21] Legendary beauties of the Moorish court. See *The Mysterious Chambers,* p. 231.

[22] plain, lowland

[23] A heavy tower of the fortress. It contains the Hall of the Ambassadors.

[24] In a wall pierced by arches, as here, the flat spaces between the arches themselves; or corresponding parts of single arches.

[25] hanging

From the great height of the vault above the windows, the upper part of the hall is almost lost in obscurity; yet there is a magnificence as well as solemnity in the gloom, as through it we have gleams of rich gilding and the brilliant tints of the Moorish pencil.

The royal throne was placed opposite the entrance in a recess, which still bears an inscription intimating that Yusef I.[26] (the monarch who completed the Alhambra) made this the throne of his empire. Everything in this noble hall seems to have been calculated to surround the throne with impressive dignity and splendor; there was none of the elegant voluptuousness which reigns in other parts of the palace. The tower is of massive strength, domineering over the whole edifice and overhanging the steep hillside. On three sides of the Hall of Ambassadors are windows cut through the immense thickness of the walls, and commanding extensive prospects. The balcony of the central window especially looks down upon the verdant valley of the Darro, with its walks, its groves, and gardens. To the left it enjoys a distant prospect of the Vega; while directly in front rises the rival height of the Albaycin, with its medley of streets, and terraces, and gardens, and once crowned by a fortress that vied in power with the Alhambra. "Ill fated the man who lost all this!" exclaimed Charles V., as he looked forth from this window upon the enchanting scenery it commands.

The balcony of the window where this royal exclamation was made, has of late become one of my favorite resorts. I have just been seated there, enjoying the close of a long brilliant day. The sun, as he sank behind the purple mountains of Alhama, sent a stream of effulgence up the valley of the Darro, that spread a melancholy pomp over the ruddy towers of the Alhambra; while the Vega, covered with a slight sultry vapor that caught the setting ray, seemed spread out in the distance like a golden sea. Not a breath of air disturbed the stillness of the hour, and though the faint sound of music and merriment now and then rose from the gardens of the Darro, it but rendered more impressive the monumental silence of the pile which overshadowed me. It was one of those hours and scenes in which memory asserts an almost magical power; and, like the evening sun beaming on these moldering towers, sends back her retrospective rays to light up the glories of the past.

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THE MYSTERIOUS CHAMBERS

As I was rambling one day about the Moorish halls, my attention was, for the first time, attracted to a door in a remote gallery, communicating apparently with some part of the Alhambra which I had not yet explored. I attempted to open it, but it was locked. I knocked, but no one answered, and the sound seemed to reverberate through empty chambers. Here then was a mystery. Here was the haunted wing of the castle. How was I to get at the dark secrets here shut up from the public eye? Should I come privately at night with lamp and sword, according to the prying custom of heroes of romance; or should I endeavor to draw the secret from Pépe the stuttering gardener; or the ingenuous Dolores, or the loquacious Mateo? Or should I go frankly and openly to Dame Antonia the chatelaine, and ask her all about it? I chose the latter course, as being the simplest though the least romantic; and found, somewhat to my disappointment, that there was no mystery in the case. I was welcome to explore the apartment, and there was the key.

Thus provided, I returned forthwith to the door. It opened, as I had surmised, to a range of vacant chambers; but they were quite different from the rest of the palace. The architecture, though rich and antiquated, was European. There was nothing Moorish about it. The first two rooms were lofty; the ceilings, broken in many places, were of cedar, deeply paneled and skilfully carved with fruits and flowers, intermingled with grotesque masks or faces.

The walls had evidently in ancient times been hung with damask; but now were naked, and scrawled over by that class of aspiring travelers who defile noble monuments with their worthless names. The windows, dismantled and open to wind and weather, looked out into a charming little secluded garden, where an alabaster fountain sparkled among roses and myrtles, and was surrounded by orange and citron trees, some of which flung their branches into the chambers. Beyond these rooms were two saloons, longer but less lofty, looking also into the garden. In the compartments of the paneled ceilings were baskets of fruit and garlands of flowers, painted by no mean hand, and in tolerable preservation. The walls also had been painted in fresco in the Italian style, but the paintings were nearly obliterated; the windows were in the same shattered state with those of the other chambers. This fanciful suite of rooms terminated in an open gallery with balustrades, running at right angles along another side of the garden. The whole apartment, so delicate and elegant in its decorations, so choice and sequestered in its situation along this retired little garden, and so different in architecture from the neighboring halls, awakened an interest in its history. I found on inquiry that it was an apartment fitted up by Italian artists in the early part of the last century, at the time when Philip V. and his second wife, the beautiful Elizabetta of Farnese, daughter of the Duke of Parma, were expected at the Alhambra. It was destined for the queen and the ladies of her train. One of the loftiest chambers had been her sleeping-room. A narrow staircase, now walled up, led up to a delightful belvidere, originally a mirador[27] of the Moorish sultanas, communicating with the harem; but which was fitted up as a boudoir for the fair Elizabetta, and still retains the name of *el tocador de la reyna,* or the queen's toilette.

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[26] Yusef succeeded to the throne in 1333.

One window of the royal sleeping-room commanded a prospect of the Generalife[28] and its embowered terraces; another looked out into the little secluded garden I have mentioned, which was decidedly Moorish in its character, and also had its history. It was in fact the garden of Lindaraxa, so often mentioned in descriptions of the Alhambra; but who this Lindaraxa was I had never heard explained. A little research gave me the few particulars known about her. She was a Moorish beauty who flourished in the court of Muhamed the Left-Handed,[29] and was the daughter of his loyal adherent, the alcayde of Malaga, who sheltered him in his city when driven from the throne. On regaining his crown, the alcayde was rewarded for his fidelity. His daughter had her apartment in the Alhambra, and was given by the king in marriage to Nasar, a young Cetimerien prince descended from Aben Hud the Just. Their espousals were doubtless celebrated in the royal palace, and their honeymoon may have passed among these very bowers.

Four centuries had elapsed since the fair Lindaraxa passed away, yet how much of the fragile beauty of the scenes she inhabited remained! The garden still bloomed in which she delighted; the fountain still presented the crystal mirror in which her charms may once have been reflected; the alabaster, it is true, had lost its whiteness; the basin beneath, overrun with weeds, had become the lurking-place of the lizard, but there was something in the very decay that enhanced the interest of the scene, speaking as it did of that mutability, the irrevocable lot of man and all his works.

The desolation too of these chambers, once the abode of the proud and elegant Elizabetta, had a more touching charm for me than if I had beheld them in their pristine splendor, glittering with the pageantry of a court.

When I returned to my quarters, in the governor's apartment, everything seemed tame and commonplace after the poetic region I had left. The thought suggested itself: Why could I not change my quarters to these vacant chambers? that would indeed be living in the Alhambra, surrounded by its gardens and fountains, as in the time of the Moorish sovereigns. I proposed the change to Dame Antonia and her family, and it occasioned vast surprise. They could not conceive any rational inducement for the choice of an apartment so forlorn, remote, and solitary. Dolores exclaimed at its frightful loneliness; nothing but bats and owls flitting about,—and then a fox and wildcat kept in the vaults of the neighboring baths, and roamed about at night. The good Tia had more reasonable objections. The neighborhood was infested by vagrants; gipsies swarmed in the caverns of the adjacent hills; the palace was ruinous and easy to be entered in many places; the rumor of a stranger quartered alone in one of the rooms and ruined apartments, out of the hearing of the rest of the inhabitants, might tempt unwelcome visitors in the night, especially as foreigners were always supposed to be well stocked with money. I was not to be diverted from my humor, however, and my will was law with these good people. So, calling in the assistance of a carpenter, and the ever officious Mateo Ximenes, the doors and windows were soon placed in a state of tolerable security, and the sleeping-room of the stately Elizabetta prepared for my reception. Mateo kindly volunteered as a body-guard to sleep in my antechamber; but I did not think it worth while to put his valor to the proof.

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[27] Belvidere and mirador have the same meaning, a roofed but open chamber affording a view.

[28] A Moorish palace east of the Alhambra.

[29] Muhamed Nasar El Hayzare, or left-handed, ascended the throne in 1423.

With all the hardihood I had assumed and all the precautions I had taken, I must confess the first night passed in these quarters was inexpressibly dreary. I do not think it was so much the apprehension of dangers from without that affected me, as the character of the place itself, with all its strange associations: the deeds of violence committed there; the tragical ends of many of those who had once reigned there in splendor. As I passed beneath the fated halls of the tower of Comares on the way to my chamber, I called to mind a quotation, that used to thrill me in the days of boyhood:

Fate sits on these dark battlements and frowns;
And, as the portal opens to receive me,
A voice in sullen echoes through the courts
Tells of a nameless deed![30]

The whole family escorted me to my chamber, and took leave of me as of one engaged on a perilous enterprise; and when I heard their retreating steps die away along the waste antechambers and echoing galleries, and turned the key of my door, I was reminded of those hobgoblin stories, where the hero is left to accomplish the adventure of an enchanted house.

Even the thoughts of the fair Elizabetta and the beauties of her court, who had once graced these chambers, now, by a perversion of fancy, added to the gloom. Here was the scene of their transient gayety and loveliness; here were the very traces of their elegance and enjoyment; but what and where were they? Dust and ashes! tenants of the tomb! phantoms of the memory!

A vague and indescribable awe was creeping over me. I would fain have ascribed it to the thoughts of robbers awakened by the evening's conversation, but I felt it was something more unreal and absurd. The long-buried superstitions of the nursery were reviving, and asserting their power over my imagination. Everything began to be affected by the working of my mind. The whispering of the wind among the citron trees beneath my window had something sinister. I cast my eyes into the garden of Lindaraxa; the groves presented a gulf of shadows; the thickets, indistinct and ghastly shapes. I was glad to close the window, but my chamber itself became infected. There was a slight rustling noise overhead; a bat suddenly emerged from a broken panel of the ceiling, flitting about the room and athwart my solitary lamp; and as the fateful bird almost flouted my face with his noiseless wing, the grotesque faces carved in high relief in the cedar ceiling, whence he had emerged, seemed to mope and mow at me.

Rousing myself, and half smiling at this temporary weakness, I resolved to brave it out in the true spirit of the hero of the enchanted house; so, taking lamp in hand, I sallied forth to make a tour of the palace. Notwithstanding every mental exertion the task was a severe one. I had to traverse waste halls and mysterious galleries, where the rays of the lamp extended but a short distance around me. I walked, as it were, in a mere halo of light, walled in by impenetrable darkness. The vaulted corridors were as caverns; the ceilings of the halls were lost in gloom. I recalled all that had been said of the danger from interlopers in these remote and ruined apartments. Might not some vagrant foe be lurking before or behind me in the outer darkness? My own shadow, cast upon the wall, began to disturb me. The echoes of my own footsteps along the corridors made me pause and look around. I was traversing scenes fraught with dismal recollections. One dark passage led down to the mosque where Yusef, the Moorish monarch, the finisher of the Alhambra, had been basely murdered. In another place I trod the gallery where another monarch had been struck down by the poinard of a relative whom he had thwarted in his love.

A low murmuring sound, as of stifled voices and clanking chains, now reached me. It seemed to come from the Hall of the Abencerrages. I knew it to be the rush of water through subterranean channels, but it sounded strangely in the night, and reminded me of the dismal stories to which it had given rise.

Soon, however, my ear was assailed by sounds too fearfully real to be the work of fancy. As I was crossing the Hall of Ambassadors, low moans and broken ejaculations rose, as it were, from beneath my feet. I paused and listened. They then appeared to be outside of the tower—then again within. Then broke forth howlings as of an animal—then stifled shrieks and inarticulate ravings. Heard in that dead hour and singular place, the effect was thrilling. I had no desire for further perambulation; but returned to my chamber with infinitely more alacrity than I had sallied forth, and drew my breath more freely when once more within its walls and the door bolted behind me. When I awoke in the morning, with the sun shining in at my window and lighting up every part of the building with his cheerful and truth-telling beams, I could scarcely recall the shadows and fancies conjured up by the gloom of the preceding night; or believe that the scenes around me, so naked and apparent, could have been clothed with such imaginary horrors.

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[30] This is the motto on the title-page of Mrs. Anne Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*, an English romantic novel of 1794.

Still, the dismal howlings and ejaculations I had heard were not ideal; they were soon accounted for, however, by my handmaid Dolores: being the ravings of a poor maniac, a brother of her aunt, who was subject to violent paroxysms, during which he was confined in a vaulted room beneath the Hall of Ambassadors.

In the course of a few evenings a thorough change took place in the scene and its associations. The moon, which when I took possession of my new apartments was invisible, gradually gained each evening upon the darkness of the night, and at length rolled in full splendor above the towers, pouring a flood of tempered light into every court and hall. The garden beneath my window, before wrapped in gloom, was gently lighted up, the orange and citron trees were tipped with silver; the fountain sparkled in the moonbeams, and even the blush of the rose was faintly visible.

I now felt the poetic merit of the Arabic inscription on the walls,—"How beauteous is this garden; where the flowers of the earth vie with the stars of heaven. What can compare with the vase of yon alabaster fountain filled with crystal water? nothing but the moon in her fulness, shining in the midst of an unclouded sky!"

On such heavenly nights I would sit for hours at my window inhaling the sweetness of the garden, and musing on the checkered fortunes of those whose history was dimly shadowed out in the elegant memorials around. Sometimes, when all was quiet, and the clock from the distant cathedral of Granada struck the midnight hour, I have sallied out on another tour and wandered over the whole building; but how different from my first tour! No longer dark and mysterious; no longer peopled with shadowy foes; no longer recalling scenes of violence and murder; all was open, spacious, beautiful; everything called up pleasing and romantic fancies; Lindaraxa once more walked in her garden; the gay chivalry of Moslem Granada once more glittered about the Court of Lions! Who can do justice to a moonlight night in such a climate and such a place? The temperature of a summer midnight in Andalusia is perfectly ethereal. We seem lifted up into a purer atmosphere; we feel a serenity of soul, a buoyancy of spirits, an elasticity of frame, which render mere existence happiness. But when moonlight is added to all this, the effect is like enchantment. Under its plastic sway the Alhambra seems to regain its pristine glories. Every rent and chasm of time; every moldering tint and weather-stain is gone; the marble resumes its original whiteness; the long colonnades brighten in the moonbeams; the halls are illuminated with a softened radiance,—we tread the enchanted palace of an Arabian tale!

What a delight at such a time, to ascend to the little airy pavilion of the queen's toilet (*el tocador de la reyna*), which, like a bird-cage, overhangs the valley of the Darro, and gaze from its light arcades upon the moonlight prospect! To the right, the swelling mountains of the Sierra Nevada, robbed of their ruggedness and softened into a fairy land, with their snowy summits gleaming like silver clouds against the deep blue sky. And then to lean over the parapet of the Tocador and gaze down upon Granada and the Albaycin[31] spread out like a map below; all buried in deep repose; the white palaces and convents sleeping in the moonshine, and beyond all these the vapory Vega fading away like a dreamland in the distance.

Sometimes the faint click of castanets rises from the Alameda, where some gay Andalusians are dancing away the summer night. Sometimes the dubious tones of a guitar and the notes of an amorous voice, tell perchance the whereabout of some moonstruck lover serenading his lady's window.

Such is a faint picture of the moonlight nights I have passed loitering about the courts and halls and balconies of this most suggestive pile; "feeding my fancy with sugared suppositions," and enjoying that mixture of reverie and sensation which steal away existence in a southern climate; so that it has been almost morning before I have retired to bed, and been lulled to sleep by the falling waters of the fountain of Lindaraxa.

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[31] A quarter of Granada north of the Alhambra just across the Darro.

LEGEND OF THE MOOR'S LEGACY[32]

Just within the fortress of the Alhambra, in front of the royal palace, is a broad open esplanade, called the Place or Square of the Cisterns, *(la Plaza de los Algibes)* so called from being undermined by reservoirs of water, hidden from sight, and which have existed from the time of the Moors. At one corner of this esplanade is a Moorish well, cut through the living rock to a great depth, the water of which is cold as ice and clear as crystal. The wells made by the Moors are always in repute, for it is well known what pains they took to penetrate to the purest and sweetest springs and fountains. The one of which we now speak is famous throughout Granada, insomuch that water-carriers, some bearing great water-jars on their shoulders, others driving asses before them laden with earthen vessels, are ascending and descending the steep woody avenues of the Alhambra, from early dawn until a late hour of the night.

Fountains and wells, ever since the scriptural days, have been noted gossiping-places in hot climates; and at the well in question there is a kind of perpetual club kept up during the livelong day, by the invalids, old women, and other curious do-nothing folk of the fortress, who sit here on the stone benches, under an awning spread over the well to shelter the toll-gatherer from the sun, and dawdle over the gossip of the fortress, and question every water-carrier that arrives about the news of the city, and make long comments on everything they hear and see. Not an hour of the day but loitering housewives and idle maid-servants may be seen, lingering, with pitcher on head or in hand, to hear the last of the endless tattle of these worthies.

Among the water-carriers who once resorted to this well, there was a sturdy, strong-backed, bandy-legged little fellow, named Pedro Gil, but called Peregil for shortness. Being a water-carrier, he was a Gallego, or native of Gallicia, of course. Nature seems to have formed races of men, as she has of animals, for different kinds of drudgery. In France the shoeblacks are all Savoyards, the porters of hotels all Swiss, and in the days of hoops and hair-powder in England,[33] no man could give the regular swing to a sedan-chair but a bog-trotting Irishman. So in Spain, the carriers of water and bearers of burdens are all sturdy little natives of Gallicia. No man says, "Get me a porter," but, "Call a Gallego."

To return from this digression, Peregil the Gallego had begun business with merely a great earthen jar which he carried upon his shoulder; by degrees he rose in the world, and was enabled to purchase an assistant of a correspondent class of animals, being a stout shaggy-haired donkey. On each side of this his long-eared aide-de-camp, in a kind of pannier, were slung his water-jars, covered with fig-leaves to protect them from the sun. There was not a more industrious water-carrier in all Granada, nor one more merry withal. The streets rang with his cheerful voice as he trudged after his donkey, singing forth the usual summer note that resounds through the Spanish towns: *"Quien quiere agua—agua mas fria que la nieve?"*—"Who wants water—water colder than snow? Who wants water from the well of the Alhambra, cold as ice and clear as crystal?" When he served a customer with a sparkling glass, it was always with a pleasant word that caused a smile; and if, perchance, it was a comely dame or dimpling damsel, it was always with a sly leer and a compliment to her beauty that was irresistible. Thus Peregil the Gallego was noted throughout all Granada for being one of the civilest, pleasantest, and happiest of mortals. Yet it is not he who sings loudest and jokes most that has the lightest heart. Under all this air of merriment, honest Peregil had his cares and troubles. He had a large family of ragged children to support, who were hungry and clamorous as a nest of young swallows, and beset him with their outcries for food whenever he came home of an evening. He had a helpmate, too, who was anything but a help to him. She had been a village beauty before marriage, noted for her skill at dancing the bolero[34] and rattling the castanets; and she still retained her early propensities, spending the hard earnings of honest Peregil in frippery, and laying the very donkey under requisition for junketing parties into the country on Sundays and saints' days, and those innumerable holidays which are rather more numerous in Spain than the days of the week. With all this she was a little of a slattern, something more of a lie-abed, and, above all, a gossip of the first water; neglecting house, household, and everything else, to loiter slipshod in the houses of her gossip neighbors.

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[32] To this tale Irving has imparted much of the racy flavor of the medieval tale.

[33] The eighteenth century.

[34] A Spanish dance representing the progress of love from shyness to passion. It is accompanied with the voice and castanets.

He, however, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, accommodates the yoke of matrimony to the submissive neck. Peregil bore all the heavy dispensations of wife and children with as meek a spirit as his donkey bore the water-jars; and, however he might shake his ears in private, never ventured to question the household virtues of his slattern spouse.

He loved his children, too, even as an owl loves its owlets, seeing in them his own image multiplied and perpetuated; for they were a sturdy, long-backed, bandy-legged little brood. The great pleasure of honest Peregil was, whenever he could afford himself a scanty holiday, and had a handful of maravedis[35] to spare, to take the whole litter forth with him, some in his arms, some tugging at his skirts, and some trudging at his heels, and to treat them to a gambol among the orchards of the Vega, while his wife was dancing with her holiday friends in the Angosturas of the Darro.[36]

It was a late hour one summer night, and most of the water-carriers had desisted from their toils. The day had been uncommonly sultry; the night was one of those delicious moonlights which tempt the inhabitants of southern climes to indemnify themselves for the heat and inaction of the day, by lingering in the open air, and enjoying its tempered sweetness until after midnight. Customers for water were therefore still abroad. Peregil, like a considerate, painstaking father, thought of his hungry children. "One more journey to the well," said he to himself, "to earn a Sunday's puchero[37] for the little ones." So saying, he trudged manfully up the steep avenue of the Alhambra, singing as he went, and now and then bestowing a hearty thwack with a cudgel on the flanks of his donkey, either by way of cadence to the song, or refreshment to the animal; for dry blows serve in lieu of provender in Spain for all beasts of burden.

When arrived at the well, he found it deserted by everyone except a solitary stranger in Moorish garb, seated on a stone bench in the moonlight. Peregil paused at first and regarded him with surprise, not unmixed with awe, but the Moor feebly beckoned him to approach. "I am faint and ill," said he; "aid me to return to the city, and I will pay thee double what thou couldst gain by thy jars of water."

The honest heart of the little water-carrier was touched with compassion at the appeal of the stranger. "God forbid," said he, "that I should ask fee or reward for doing a common act of humanity." He accordingly helped the Moor on his donkey, and set off slowly for Granada, the poor Moslem being so weak that it was necessary to hold him on the animal to keep him from falling to the earth.

When they entered the city, the water-carrier demanded whither he should conduct him. "Alas!" said the Moor, faintly, "I have neither home nor habitation; I am a stranger in the land. Suffer me to lay my head this night beneath thy roof, and thou shalt be amply repaid."

Honest Peregil thus saw himself unexpectedly saddled with an infidel guest, but he was too humane to refuse a night's shelter to a fellow-being in so forlorn a plight; so he conducted the Moor to his dwelling. The children, who had sallied forth open-mouthed as usual on hearing the tramp of the donkey, ran back with affright when they beheld the turbaned stranger, and hid themselves behind their mother. The latter stepped forth intrepidly, like a ruffling hen before her brood when a vagrant dog approaches.

"What infidel companion," cried she, "is this you have brought home at this late hour, to draw upon us the eyes of the inquisition?"

"Be quiet, wife," replied the Gallego; "here is a poor sick stranger, without friend or home; wouldst thou turn him forth to perish in the streets?"

The wife would still have remonstrated, for although she lived in a hovel, she was a furious stickler for the credit of her house; the little water-carrier, however, for once was stiff necked, and refused to bend beneath the yoke. He assisted the poor Moslem to alight, and spread a mat and a sheepskin for him on the ground, in the coolest part of the house; being the only kind of bed that his poverty afforded.

In a little while the Moor was seized with violent convulsions, which defied all the ministering skill of the simple water-carrier. The eye of the poor patient acknowledged his kindness. During an interval of his fits he called him to his side, and addressing him in a low voice, "My end," said he, "I fear is at hand. If I die, I bequeath you this box as a reward for your charity:" so saying, he opened his albornoz, or cloak, and showed a small box of sandal-wood, strapped round his body. "God grant, my friend," replied the worthy little Gallego, "that you may live many years to enjoy your treasure, whatever it may be." The Moor shook his head; he laid his hand upon the box, and would have said something more concerning it, but his convulsions returned with increasing violence, and in a little while he expired.

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[35] Spanish copper coins of less than one cent in value.

[36] Perhaps a local name for the part of Granada close to the river Darro before it was covered over as it now is within the city.

[37] pot (of food)

The water-carrier's wife was now as one distracted. "This comes," said she, "of your foolish good-nature, always running into scrapes to oblige others. What will become of us when this corpse is found in our house? We shall be sent to prison as murderers; and if we escape with our lives, shall be ruined by notaries and alguazils."[38]

Poor Peregil was in equal tribulation, and almost repented himself of having done a good deed. At length a thought struck him. "It is not yet day," said he; "I can convey the dead body out of the city, and bury it in the sands on the banks of the Xenil. No one saw the Moor enter our dwelling, and no one will know anything of his death."

So said, so done. The wife aided him; they rolled the body of the unfortunate Moslem in the mat on which he had expired, laid it across the ass, and Peregil set out with it for the banks of the river.

As ill luck would have it, there lived opposite to the water-carrier a barber named Pedrillo Pedrugo, one of the most prying, tattling, and mischief-making of his gossip tribe. He was a weasel-faced, spider-legged varlet, supple and insinuating; the famous barber of Seville[39] could not surpass him for his universal knowledge of the affairs of others, and he had no more power of retention than a sieve. It was said that he slept but with one eye at a time, and kept one ear uncovered, so that even in his sleep he might see and hear all that was going on. Certain it is, he was a sort of scandalous chronicle for the quidnuncs[40] of Granada, and had more customers than all the rest of his fraternity.

This meddlesome barber heard Peregil arrive at an unusual hour at night, and the exclamations of his wife and children. His head was instantly popped out of a little window which served him as a look-out, and he saw his neighbor assist a man in Moorish garb into his dwelling. This was so strange an occurrence, that Pedrillo Pedrugo slept not a wink that night. Every five minutes he was at his loophole watching the lights that gleamed through the chinks of his neighbor's door, and before daylight he beheld Peregil sally forth with his donkey unusually laden.

The inquisitive barber was in a fidget; he slipped on his clothes, and, stealing forth silently followed the water-carrier at a distance, until he saw him dig a hole in the sandy bank of the Xenil, and bury something that had the appearance of a dead body.

The barber hied him home, and fidgeted about his shop, setting everything upside down, until sunrise. He then took a basin under his arm, and sallied forth to the house of his daily customer the alcalde.[41]

The alcalde was just risen. Pedrillo Pedrugo seated him in a chair, threw a napkin round his neck, put a basin of hot water under his chin, and began to mollify his beard with his fingers.

"Strange doings!" said Pedrugo, who played barber and newsmonger at the same time,—"strange doings! Robbery, and murder, and burial all in one night!"

"Hey!—how!—what is that you say?" cried the alcalde.

"I say," replied the barber, rubbing a piece of soap over the nose and mouth of the dignitary, for a Spanish barber disdains to employ a brush,—"I say that Peregil the Gallego has robbed and murdered a Moorish Mussulman, and buried him, this blessed night. *Maldita sea la noche;*—Accursed be the night for the same!"

"But how do you know all this?" demanded the alcalde.

"Be patient, Señor, and you shall hear all about it," replied Pedrillo, taking him by the nose and sliding a razor over his cheek. He then recounted all that he had seen, going through both operations at the same time, shaving his beard, washing his chin, and wiping him dry with a dirty napkin, while he was robbing, murdering, and burying the Moslem.

Now it so happened that this alcalde was one of the most overbearing, and at the same time most griping and corrupt curmudgeons in all Granada. It could not be denied, however, that he set a high value upon justice, for he sold it at its weight in gold. He presumed the case in point to be one of murder and robbery; doubtless there must be a rich spoil; how was it to be secured into the legitimate hands of the law? for as to merely entrapping the delinquent—that would be feeding the gallows; but entrapping the booty—that would be enriching the judge, and such, according to his creed, was the great end of justice. So thinking, he summoned to his presence his trustiest alguazil—a gaunt, hungry-looking varlet, clad according to the custom of his order, in the ancient Spanish garb, a broad black beaver turned up at its sides; a quaint ruff; a small black cloak dangling from his shoulders; rusty black under clothes that set off his spare wiry frame, while in his hands he bore a slender white wand, the dreaded insignia of his office. Such was the legal bloodhound of the ancient Spanish breed, that he put upon the traces of the unlucky water-carrier, and such was his speed and certainty, that he was upon the haunches of poor Peregil before he had returned to his dwelling, and brought both him and his donkey before the dispenser of justice.

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[38] constables

[39] Figaro, in *The Barber of Seville*, a comic opera by Beaumarchais, in 1772.

[40] One always asking "What now?" A gossip.

[41] mayor-magistrate

The alcalde bent upon him one of the most terrific frowns. "Hark ye, culprit!" roared he, in a voice that made the knees of the little Gallego smite together,—"hark ye, culprit! there is no need of denying thy guilt, everything is known to me. A gallows is the proper reward for the crime thou hast committed, but I am merciful, and readily listen to reason. The man that has been murdered in thy house was a Moor, an infidel, the enemy of our faith. It was doubtless in a fit of religious zeal that thou hast slain him. I will be indulgent, therefore; render up the property of which thou hast robbed him, and we will hush the matter up."

The poor water-carrier called upon all the saints to witness his innocence; alas! not one of them appeared; and if they had, the alcalde would have disbelieved the whole calendar. The water-carrier related the whole story of the dying Moor with the straightforward simplicity of truth, but it was all in vain. "Wilt thou persist in saying," demanded the judge, "that this Moslem had neither gold nor jewels, which were the object of thy cupidity?"

"As I hope to be saved, your worship," replied the water-carrier, "he had nothing but a small box of sandal-wood which he bequeathed to me in reward for my services."

"A box of sandal-wood! a box of sandal-wood!" exclaimed the alcalde, his eyes sparkling at the idea of precious jewels. "And where is this box? where have you concealed it?"

"An' it please your grace," replied the water-carrier, "it is in one of the panniers of my mule, and heartily at the service of your worship."

He had hardly spoken the words, when the keen alguazil darted off, and reappeared in an instant with the mysterious box of sandalwood. The alcalde opened it with an eager and trembling hand; all pressed forward to gaze upon the treasure it was expected to contain; when, to their disappointment, nothing appeared within, but a parchment scroll, covered with Arabic characters, and an end of a waxen taper.

When there is nothing to be gained by the conviction of a prisoner, justice, even in Spain, is apt to be impartial. The alcalde, having recovered from his disappointment, and found that there was really no booty in the case, now listened dispassionately to the explanation of the water-carrier, which was corroborated by the testimony of his wife. Being convinced, therefore, of his innocence, he discharged him from arrest; nay more, he permitted him to carry off the Moor's legacy, the box of sandal-wood and its contents, as the well-merited reward of his humanity; but he retained his donkey in payment of costs and charges.

Behold the unfortunate little Gallego reduced once more to the necessity of being his own water-carrier, and trudging up to the well of the Alhambra with a great earthen jar upon his shoulder.

As he toiled up the hill in the heat of a summer noon, his usual good-humor forsook him. "Dog of an alcalde!" would he cry, "to rob a poor man of the means of his subsistence, of the best friend he had in the world!" And then at the remembrance of the beloved companion of his labors, all the kindness of his nature would break forth. "Ah, donkey of my heart!" would he exclaim, resting his burden on a stone, and wiping the sweat from his brow,—"ah, donkey of my heart! I warrant me thou thinkest of thy old master! I warrant me thou missest the water-jars—poor beast."

To add to his afflictions, his wife received him, on his return home, with whimperings and repinings; she had clearly the vantage-ground of him, having warned him not to commit the egregious act of hospitality which had brought on him all these misfortunes; and, like a knowing woman, she took every occasion to throw her superior sagacity in his teeth. If her children lacked food, or needed a new garment, she could answer with a sneer, "Go to your father—he is heir to king Chico of the Alhambra: ask him to help you out of the Moor's strong box."

Was ever poor mortal so soundly punished for having done a good action? The unlucky Peregil was grieved in flesh and spirit, but still he bore meekly with the railings of his spouse. At length, one evening, when, after a hot day's toil, she taunted him in the usual manner, he lost all patience. He did not venture to retort upon her, but his eye rested upon the box of sandal-wood, which lay on a shelf with lid half open, as if laughing in mockery at his vexation. Seizing it up, he dashed it with indignation to the floor. "Unlucky was the day that I ever set eyes on thee," he cried, "or sheltered thy master beneath my roof!"

As the box struck the floor, the lid flew wide open, and the parchment scroll rolled forth.

Peregil sat regarding the scroll for some time in moody silence. At length rallying his ideas, "Who knows," thought he, "but this writing may be of some importance, as the Moor seems to have guarded it with such care?" Picking it up therefore, he put it in his bosom, and the next morning, as he was crying water through the streets, he stopped at the shop of a Moor, a native of Tangiers, who sold trinkets and perfumery in the Zacatin,[42] and asked him to explain the contents.

The Moor read the scroll attentively, then stroked his beard and smiled. "This manuscript," said he, "is a form of incantation for the recovery of hidden treasure that is under the power of enchantment. It is said to have such virtue that the strongest bolts and bars, nay the adamantine rock itself, will yield before it!"

"Bah!" cried the little Gallego, "what is all that to me? I am no enchanter, and know nothing of buried treasure." So saying, he shouldered his water-jar, left the scroll in the hands of the Moor, and trudged forward on his daily rounds.

That evening, however, as he rested himself about twilight at the well of the Alhambra, he found a number of gossips assembled at the place, and their conversation, as is not unusual at that shadowy hour, turned upon old tales and traditions of a supernatural nature. Being all poor as rats, they dwelt with peculiar fondness upon the popular theme of enchanted riches left by the Moors in various parts of the Alhambra. Above all, they concurred in the belief that there were great treasures buried deep in the earth under the tower of the seven floors.

These stories made an unusual impression on the mind of the honest Peregil, and they sank deeper and deeper into his thoughts as he returned alone down the darkling avenues. "If, after all, there should be treasure hid beneath that tower; and if the scroll I left with the Moor should enable me to get at it!" In the sudden ecstasy of the thought he had wellnigh let fall his water-jar.

That night he tumbled and tossed, and could scarcely get a wink of sleep for the thoughts that were bewildering his brain. Bright and early he repaired to the shop of the Moor, and told him all that was passing in his mind. "You can read Arabic," said he; "suppose we go together to the tower, and try the effect of the charm; if it fails, we are no worse off than before; but if it succeeds, we will share equally all the treasure we may discover."

"Hold," replied the Moslem; "this writing is not sufficient of itself; it must be read at midnight, by the light of a taper singularly compounded and prepared, the ingredients of which are not within my reach. Without such a taper the scroll is of no avail."

"Say no more!" cried the little Gallego; "I have such a taper at hand, and will bring it here in a moment." So saying, he hastened home, and soon returned with the end of yellow wax taper that he had found in the box of sandal-wood.

The Moor felt it and smelt of it. "Here are rare and costly perfumes," said he, "combined with this yellow wax. This is the kind of taper specified in the scroll. While this burns, the strongest walls and most secret caverns will remain open. Woe to him, however, who lingers within until it be extinguished. He will remain enchanted with the treasure."

It was now agreed between them to try the charm that very night. At a late hour, therefore, when nothing was stirring but bats and owls, they ascended the woody hill of the Alhambra, and approached that awful tower, shrouded by trees and rendered formidable by so many traditionary tales. By the light of a lantern they groped their way through bushes, and over fallen stones, to the door of a vault beneath the tower. With fear and trembling they descended a flight of steps cut into the rock. It led to an empty chamber, damp and drear, from which another flight of steps led to a deeper vault. In this way they descended four several flights, leading into as many vaults, one below the other, but the floor of the fourth was solid; and though, according to tradition, there remained three vaults still below, it was said to be impossible to penetrate further, the residue being shut up by strong enchantment. The air of this vault was damp and chilly, and had an earthy smell, and the light scarce cast forth any rays. They paused here for a time, in breathless suspense, until they faintly heard the clock of the watch-tower strike midnight; upon this they lit the waxen taper, which diffused an odor of myrrh and frankincense and storax.[43]

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[42] A narrow market-street of Granada.

The Moor began to read in a hurried voice. He had scarce finished when there was a noise as of subterraneous thunder. The earth shook, and the floor, yawning open, disclosed a flight of steps. Trembling with awe, they descended, and by the light of the lantern found themselves in another vault covered with Arabic inscriptions. In the center stood a great chest, secured with seven bands of steel, at each end of which sat an enchanted Moor in armor, but motionless as a statue, being controlled by the power of the incantation. Before the chest were several jars filled with gold and silver and precious stones. In the largest of these they thrust their arms up to the elbow, and at every dip hauled forth handfuls of broad yellow pieces of Moorish gold, or bracelets and ornaments of the same precious metal, while occasionally a necklace of Oriental pearl would stick to their fingers. Still they trembled and breathed short while cramming their pockets with the spoils; and cast many a fearful glance at the two enchanted Moors, who sat grim and motionless, glaring upon them with unwinking eyes. At length, struck with a sudden panic at some fancied noise, they both rushed up the staircase, tumbled over one another into the upper apartment, overturned and extinguished the waxen taper, and the pavement again closed with a thundering sound.

Filled with dismay, they did not pause until they had groped their way out of the tower, and beheld the stars shining through the trees. Then seating themselves upon the grass, they divided the spoil, determining to content themselves for the present with this mere skimming of the jars, but to return on some future night and drain them to the bottom. To make sure of each other's good faith, also, they divided the talismans between them, one retaining the scroll and the other the taper; this done, they set off with light hearts and well-lined pockets for Granada.

As they wended their way down the hill, the shrewd Moor whispered a word of counsel in the ear of the simple little water-carrier.

"Friend Peregil," said he, "all this affair must be kept a profound secret until we have secured the treasure, and conveyed it out of harm's way. If a whisper of it gets to the ear of the alcalde, we are undone!"

"Certainly," replied the Gallego, "nothing can be more true."

"Friend Peregil," said the Moor, "you are a discreet man, and I make no doubt can keep a secret; but you have a wife."

"She shall not know a word of it," replied the little water-carrier, sturdily.

"Enough," said the Moor, "I depend upon thy discretion and thy promise."

Never was promise more positive and sincere; but, alas! what man can keep a secret from his wife? Certainly not such a one as Peregil the water-carrier, who was one of the most loving and tractable of husbands. On his return home, he found his wife moping in a corner. "Mighty well," cried she as he entered, "you've come at last, after rambling about until this hour of the night. I wonder you have not brought home another Moor as a house-mate." Then bursting into tears, she began to wring her hands and smite her breast. "Unhappy woman that I am!" exclaimed she, "what will become of me? My house stripped and plundered by lawyers and alguazils; my husband a do-no-good, that no longer brings home bread to his family, but goes rambling about day and night, with infidel Moors! O my children! my children! what will become of us? We shall all have to beg in the streets!"

Honest Peregil was so moved by the distress of his spouse, that he could not help whimpering also. His heart was as full as his pockets, and not to be restrained. Thrusting his hand into the latter he hauled forth three or four broad gold pieces, and slipped them into her bosom. The poor woman stared with astonishment, and could not understand the meaning of this golden shower. Before she could recover her surprise, the little Gallego drew forth a chain of gold and dangled it before her, capering with exultation, his mouth distended from ear to ear.

"Holy Virgin protect us!" exclaimed the wife. "What hast thou been doing, Peregil? surely thou hast not been committing murder and robbery!"

The idea scarce entered the brain of the poor woman, than it became a certainty with her. She saw a prison and a gallows in the distance, and a little bandy-legged Gallego hanging pendent from it; and, overcome by the horrors conjured up by her imagination, fell into violent hysterics.

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[43] Myrrh, frankincense, and storax are all gums or resins much used in the making of perfumes.

What could the poor man do? He had no other means of pacifying his wife, and dispelling the phantoms of her fancy, than by relating the whole story of his good fortune. This, however, he did not do until he had exacted from her the most solemn promise to keep it a profound secret from every living being.

To describe her joy would be impossible. She flung her arms round the neck of her husband, and almost strangled him with her caresses. "Now, wife," exclaimed the little man with honest exultation, "what say you now to the Moor's legacy? Henceforth never abuse me for helping a fellow-creature in distress."

The honest Gallego retired to his sheepskin mat, and slept as soundly as if on a bed of down. Not so his wife; she emptied the whole contents of his pockets upon the mat, and sat counting gold pieces of Arabic coin, trying on necklaces and earrings, and fancying the figure she should one day make when permitted to enjoy her riches.

On the following morning the honest Gallego took a broad golden coin, and repaired with it to a jeweler's shop in the Zacatin to offer it for sale, pretending to have found it among the ruins of the Alhambra. The jeweler saw that it had an Arabic inscription and was of the purest gold; he offered, however, but a third of its value, with which the water-carrier was perfectly content. Peregil now bought new clothes for his little flock, and all kinds of toys, together with ample provisions for a hearty meal, and returning to his dwelling, set all his children dancing around him, while he capered in the midst, the happiest of fathers.

The wife of the water-carrier kept her promise of secrecy with surprising strictness. For a whole day and a half she went about with a look of mystery and a heart swelling almost to bursting, yet she held her peace, though surrounded by her gossips. It is true, she could not help giving herself a few airs, apologized for her ragged dress, and talked of ordering a new basquina[44] all trimmed with gold lace and bugles, and a new lace mantilla. She threw out hints of her husband's intention of leaving off his trade of water-carrying, as it did not altogether agree with his health. In fact she thought they should all retire to the country for the summer, that the children might have the benefit of the mountain air, for there was no living in the city in this sultry season.

The neighbors stared at each other, and thought the poor woman had lost her wits; and her airs and graces and elegant pretentions were the theme of universal scoffing and merriment among her friends, the moment her back was turned.

If she restrained herself abroad, however, she indemnified herself at home, and putting a string of rich Oriental pearls round her neck, Moorish bracelets on her arms, and an aigrette of diamonds on her head, sailed backwards and forwards in her slattern rags about the room, now and then stopping to admire herself in a broken mirror. Nay, in the impulse of her simple vanity, she could not resist, on one occasion, showing herself at the window to enjoy the effect of her finery on the passers-by.

As the fates would have it, Pedrillo Pedrugo, the meddlesome barber, was at this moment sitting idly in his shop on the opposite side of the street, when his ever-watchful eye caught the sparkle of a diamond. In an instant he was at his loophole reconnoitering the slattern spouse of the water-carrier, decorated with the splendor of an eastern bride. No sooner had he taken an accurate inventory of her ornaments, than he posted off with all speed to the alcalde. In a little while the hungry alguazil was again on the scent, and before the day was over the unfortunate Peregil was once more dragged into the presence of the judge.

"How is this, villain!" cried the alcalde, in a furious voice. "You told me that the infidel who died in your house left nothing behind but an empty coffer, and now I hear of your wife flaunting in her rags decked out with pearls and diamonds. Wretch that thou art! prepare to render up the spoils of thy miserable victim, and to swing on the gallows that is already tired of waiting for thee."

The terrified water-carrier fell on his knees, and made a full relation of the marvelous manner in which he had gained his wealth. The alcalde, the alguazil, and the inquisitive barber listened with greedy ears to this Arabian tale of enchanted treasure. The alguazil was dispatched to bring the Moor who had assisted in the incantation. The Moslem entered half frightened out of his wits at finding himself in the hands of the harpies of the law. When he beheld the water-carrier standing with sheepish looks and downcast countenance, he comprehended the whole matter. "Miserable animal," said he, as he passed near him, "did I not warn thee against babbling to thy wife?"

The story of the Moor coincided exactly

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[44] under petticoat

with that of his colleague; but the alcalde affected to be slow of belief, and threw out menaces of imprisonment and rigorous investigation.

"Softly, good Señor Alcalde," said the Mussulman, who by this time had recovered his usual shrewdness and self-possession. "Let us not mar fortune's favors in the scramble for them. Nobody knows anything of this matter but ourselves; let us keep the secret. There is wealth enough in the cave to enrich us all. Promise a fair division, and all shall be produced; refuse, and the cave shall remain forever closed."

The alcalde consulted apart with the alguazil. The latter was an old fox in his profession. "Promise anything," said he, "until you get possession of the treasure. You may then seize upon the whole, and if he and his accomplice dare to murmur, threaten them with the fagot and the stake as infidels and sorcerers."

The alcalde relished the advice. Smoothing his brow and turning to the Moor, "This is a strange story," said he, "and may be true, but I must have ocular proof of it. This very night you must repeat the incantation in my presence. If there be really such treasure, we will share it amicably between us, and say nothing further of the matter; if ye have deceived me, expect no mercy at my hands. In the mean time you must remain in custody."

The Moor and the water-carrier cheerfully agreed to these conditions, satisfied that the event would prove the truth of their words.

Towards midnight the alcalde sallied forth secretly, attended by the alguazil and the meddlesome barber, all strongly armed. They conducted the Moor and the water-carrier as prisoners, and were provided with the stout donkey of the latter to bear off the expected treasure. They arrived at the tower without being observed, and tying the donkey to a figtree, descended into the fourth vault of the tower.

The scroll was produced, the yellow waxen taper lighted, and the Moor read the form of incantation. The earth trembled as before, and the pavement opened with a thundering sound, disclosing the narrow flight of steps. The alcalde, the alguazil, and the barber were struck aghast, and could not summon courage to descend. The Moor and the water-carrier entered the lower vault, and found the two Moors seated as before, silent and motionless. They removed two of the great jars, filled with golden coin and precious stones. The water-carrier bore them up one by one upon his shoulders, but though a strong-backed little man, and accustomed to carry burdens, he staggered beneath their weight, and found, when slung on each side of his donkey, they were as much as the animal could bear.

"Let us be content for the present," said the Moor; "here is as much treasure as we can carry off without being perceived, and enough to make us all wealthy to our heart's desire."

"Is there more treasure remaining behind?" demanded the alcalde.

"The greatest prize of all," said the Moor, "a huge coffer bound with bands of steel, and filled with pearls and precious stones."

"Let us have up the coffer by all means," cried the grasping alcalde.

"I will descend for no more," said the Moor, doggedly; "enough is enough for a reasonable man—more is superfluous."

"And I," said the water-carrier, "will bring up no further burden to break the back of my poor donkey."

Finding commands, threats, and entreaties equally vain, the alcalde turned to his two adherents. "Aid me," said he, "to bring up the coffer, and its contents shall be divided between us." So saying, he descended the steps, followed with trembling reluctance by the alguazil and the barber.

No sooner did the Moor behold them fairly earthed than he extinguished the yellow taper; the pavement closed with its usual crash, and the three worthies remained buried in its womb.

He then hastened up the different flights of steps, nor stopped until in the open air. The little water-carrier followed him as fast as his short legs would permit.

"What hast thou done?" cried Peregil, as soon as he could recover breath. "The alcalde and the other two are shut up in the vault."

"It is the will of Allah!" said the Moor, devoutly.

"And will you not release them?" demanded the Gallego.

"Allah forbid!" replied the Moor, smoothing his beard. "It is written in the book of fate that they shall remain enchanted until some future adventurer arrive to break the charm. The will of God be done!" so saying, he hurled the end of the waxen taper far among the gloomy thickets of the glen.

There was now no remedy; so the Moor and the water-carrier proceeded with the richly laden donkey toward the city, nor could honest Peregil refrain from hugging and kissing his long-eared fellow-laborer, thus restored to him from the clutches of the law; and, in fact, it is doubtful which gave the simple-hearted little man most joy at the moment, the gaining of the treasure, or the recovery of the donkey.

The two partners in good luck divided their spoil amicably and fairly, except that the Moor, who had a little taste for trinketry, made out to get into his heap the most of the pearls and precious stones and other baubles, but then he always gave the water-carrier in lieu magnificent jewels of massy gold, of five times the size, with which the latter was heartily content. They took care not to linger within reach of accidents, but made off to enjoy their wealth undisturbed in other countries. The Moor returned to Africa, to his native city of Tangiers, and the Gallego, with his wife, his children, and his donkey, made the best of his way to Portugal. Here, under the admonition and tuition of his wife, he became a personage of some consequence, for she made the worthy little man array his long body and short legs in doublet and hose, with a feather in his hat and a sword by his side, and laying aside his familiar appellation of Peregil, assume the more sonorous title of Don Pedro Gil: his progeny grew up a thriving and merry-hearted, though short and bandy-legged generation, while Señora Gil, befringed, belaced, and betasseled from her head to her heels, with glittering rings on every finger, became a model of slattern fashion and finery.

As to the alcalde and his adjuncts, they remained shut up under the great tower of the seven floors, and there they remain spell-bound at the present day. Whenever there shall be a lack in Spain of gossiping barbers, sharking alguazils, and corrupt alcaldes, they may be sought after; but if they have to wait until such time for their deliverance, there is danger of their enchantment enduring until doomsday.

SPANISH ROMANCE

In the latter part of my sojourn in the Alhambra, I made frequent descents into the Jesuit's Library of the University; and relished more and more the old Spanish chronicles, which I found there bound in parchment. I delight in those quaint histories which treat of the times when the Moslems maintained a foothold in the Peninsula. With all their bigotry and occasional intolerance, they are full of noble acts and generous sentiments, and have a high, spicy, oriental flavor, not to be found in other records of the times, which were merely European. In fact, Spain, even at the present day, is a country apart; severed in history, habits, manners, and modes of thinking, from all the rest of Europe. It is a romantic country; but its romance has none of the sentimentality of modern European romance; it is chiefly derived from the brilliant regions of the East, and from the high-minded school of Saracenic chivalry.

The Arab invasion and conquest brought a higher civilization, and a nobler style of thinking, into Gothic Spain. The Arabs were a quick-witted, sagacious, proud-spirited, and poetical people, and were imbued with oriental science and literature. Wherever they established a seat of power, it became a rallying-place for the learned and ingenious; and they softened and refined the people whom they conquered. By degrees, occupancy seemed to give them an hereditary right to their foothold in the land; they ceased to be looked upon as invaders, and were regarded as rival neighbors. The Peninsula, broken up into a variety of states, both Christian and Moslem, became, for centuries, a great campaigning-ground, where the art of war seemed to be the principal business of man, and was carried to the highest pitch of romantic chivalry. The original ground of hostility, a difference of faith, gradually lost its rancor. Neighboring states, of opposite creeds, were occasionally linked together in alliances, offensive and defensive; so that the cross and crescent were to be seen side by side, fighting against some common enemy. In times of peace, too, the noble youth of either faith resorted to the same cities, Christian or Moslem, to school themselves in military science. Even in the temporary truces of sanguinary wars, the warriors who had recently striven together in the deadly conflicts of the field, laid aside their animosity, met at tournaments, jousts, and other military festivities, and exchanged the courtesies of gentle and generous spirits. Thus the opposite races became frequently mingled together in peaceful intercourse, or if any rivalry took place, it was in those high courtesies and nobler acts, which bespeak the accomplished cavalier. Warriors of opposite creeds became ambitious of transcending each other in magnanimity as well as valor. Indeed, the chivalric virtues were refined upon to a degree sometimes fastidious and constrained, but at other times inexpressibly noble and affecting. The annals of the times teem with illustrious instances of high-wrought courtesy, romantic generosity, lofty disinterestedness, and punctilious honor, that warm the very soul to read them. These have furnished themes for national plays and poems, or have been celebrated in those all-pervading ballads, which are as the life-breath of the people, and thus have continued to exercise an influence on the national character, which centuries of vicissitude and decline have not been able to destroy; so that, with all their faults, and they are many, the Spaniards, even at the present day, are, on many points, the most high-minded and proud-spirited people of Europe. It is true, the romance of feeling derived from the sources I have mentioned, has, like all other romance, its affectations and extremes. It renders the Spaniard at times pompous and grandiloquent; prone to carry the *pundonor,* or point of honor, beyond the bounds of sober sense and sound morality; disposed, in the midst of poverty, to affect the *grande caballero,*[45] and to look down with sovereign disdain upon "arts mechanical," and all the gainful pursuits of plebeian life; but this very inflation of spirit, while it fills his brain with vapors, lifts him above a thousand meannesses; and though it often keeps him in indigence, ever protects him from vulgarity.

In the present day, when popular literature is running into the low levels of life, and luxuriating on the vices and follies of mankind; and when the universal pursuit of gain is trampling down the early growth of poetic feeling, and wearing out the verdure of the soul, I question whether it would not be of service for the reader occasionally to turn to these records of prouder times and loftier modes of thinking; and to steep himself to the very lips in old Spanish romance.

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THE AUTHOR'S FAREWELL TO GRANADA

My serene and happy reign in the Alhambra was suddenly brought to a close by letters which reached me, while indulging in oriental luxury, in the cool hall of the baths, summoning me away from my Moslem elysium, to mingle once more in the bustle and business of the dusty world. How was I to encounter its toils and turmoils, after such a life of repose and reverie! How was I to endure its commonplace, after the poetry of the Alhambra!

But little preparation was necessary for my departure. A two-wheeled vehicle, called a tartana, very much resembling a covered cart, was to be the traveling equipage of a young Englishman and myself through Murcia, to Alicant and Valencia, on our way to France; and a long-limbed varlet, who had been a contrabandista, and, for aught I knew, a robber, was to be our guide and guard. The preparations were soon made, but the departure was the difficulty. Day after day was it postponed; day after day was spent in lingering about my favorite haunts, and day after day they appeared more delightful in my eyes.

The social and domestic little world also, in which I had been moving, had become singularly endeared to me; and the concern evinced by them at my intended departure, convinced me that my kind feelings were reciprocated. Indeed, when at length the day arrived, I did not dare venture upon a leave-taking at the good Dame Antonia's; I saw the soft heart of little Dolores, at least, was brim full and ready for an overflow. So I bade a silent adieu to the palace and its inmates, and descended into the city as if intending to return. There, however, the tartana and the guide were ready; so, after taking a noonday's repast with my fellow-traveler at the Posada, I set out with him on our journey.

Humble was the cortege and melancholy the departure of El Rey Chico[46] the second! Manuel, the nephew of Tia Antonia, Mateo, my officious but now disconsolate squire, and two or three old invalids of the Alhambra, with whom I had grown into gossiping companionship, had come down to see me off; for it is one of the good old customs of Spain, to sally forth several miles to meet a coming friend, and to accompany him as far on his departure. Thus then we set out, our long-legged guide striding ahead, with his escopeta[47] on his shoulder; Manuel and Mateo on each side of the tartana, and the old invalids behind.

At some little distance to the north of Granada, the road gradually ascends the hills; here I alighted and walked up slowly with Manuel, who took this occasion to confide to me the secret of his heart and of all those tender concerns between himself and Dolores, with which I had been already informed by the all-knowing and all-revealing Mateo Ximenes. His doctor's diploma had prepared the way for their union, and nothing more was wanting but the dispensation of the Pope, on account of their consanguinity. Then, if he could get the post of Medico of the fortress, his happiness would be complete! I congratulated him on the judgment and good taste he had shown in his choice of a helpmate; invoked all possible felicity on their union, and trusted that the abundant affections of the kindhearted little Dolores would in time have more stable objects to occupy them than recreant cats and truant pigeons.

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[45] great gentleman

[46] Irving calls himself El Rey Chico (King Chico, The Little King) in remembrance of the last king of Granada.

[47] carbine

It was indeed a sorrowful parting when I took leave of these good people and saw them slowly descend the hills; now and then turning round to wave me a last adieu. Manuel, it is true, had cheerful prospects to console him, but poor Mateo seemed perfectly cast down. It was to him a grievous fall from the station of prime minister and historiographer, to his old brown cloak and his starveling mystery of ribbon-weaving; and the poor devil, notwithstanding his occasional officiousness, had, somehow or other, acquired a stronger hold on my sympathies than I was aware of. It would have really been a consolation in parting, could I have anticipated the good fortune in store for him, and to which I had contributed; for the importance I had appeared to give to his tales and gossip and local knowledge, and the frequent companionship in which I had indulged him in the course of my strolls, had elevated his idea of his own qualifications and opened a new career to him; and the son of the Alhambra has since become its regular and well-paid cicerone; insomuch that I am told he has never been obliged to resume the ragged old brown cloak in which I first found him.

Towards sunset I came to where the road wound into the mountains, and here I paused to take a last look at Granada. The hill on which I stood commanded a glorious view of the city, the Vega, and the surrounding mountains. It was at an opposite point of the compass from *La cuesta de las lagrimas* (the hill of tears) noted for the "last sigh of the Moor." I now could realize something of the feelings of poor Boabdil when he bade adieu to the paradise he was leaving behind, and beheld before him a rugged and sterile road conducting him to exile.[48]

The setting sun as usual shed a melancholy effulgence on the ruddy towers of the Alhambra. I could faintly discern the balconied window of the tower of Comares, where I had indulged in so many delightful reveries. The bosky groves and gardens about the city were richly gilded with the sunshine, the purple haze of a summer evening was gathering over the Vega; everything was lovely, but tenderly and sadly so, to my parting gaze.

"I will hasten from this prospect," thought I, "before the sun is set. I will carry away a recollection of it clothed in all its beauty."

With these thoughts I pursued my way among the mountains. A little further and Granada, the Vega, and the Alhambra, were shut from my view; and thus ended one of the pleasantest dreams of a life, which the reader perhaps may think has been but too much made up of dreams.

1829-1832 1832

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

Born, Burlington, New Jersey, 1789, died, Cooperstown, New York, 1851. Cooper's ancestors were English and Swedish Quakers. He was brought up on his father's vast wilderness estate at Otsego Lake, New York, educated in the local schools and in the home of an Episcopal clergyman at Albany, was three years at Yale, went to sea, secured a midshipman's commission, and served in the navy until 1811. He took up literature by chance in 1820 and soon achieved success. From 1826 he lived abroad for seven years and then settled at Cooperstown. A rather irritable disposition and tactless criticisms of his fellow countrymen involved him in frequent local and public controversies. His works include some forty titles, chief among which are *The Spy*, 1821; *The Pioneers*, and *The Pilot*, 1823; *The Last of the Mohicans*, 1826; *The Prairie*, 1827; *History of the Navy of the United States*, 1839; *The Pathfinder*, 1840; *The Deerslayer*, 1841. Cooper has been translated into nearly all European languages.

THE PILOT[1]

CHAPTER IV

> Behold the threaden[2] sails,
> Borne with the invisible and creeping winds
> Draw the huge bottoms through the furrowed sea,
> Breasting the lofty surge.
>
> SHAKSPERE.[3]

It has been already explained to the reader, that there were threatening symptoms in the appearance of the weather to create serious forebodings of evil in the breast of a seaman. When removed from the shadows of the cliffs, the night was not so dark but objects could be discerned at some little distance, and in the eastern horizon there was a streak of fearful light impending over the gloomy waters, in which the swelling outline formed by the rising waves was becoming each moment more distinct, and consequently, more alarming. Several dark clouds overhung the vessel, whose towering masts apparently propped the black vapor, while a few stars were seen twinkling with a sickly flame in the streak of clear sky that skirted the ocean. Still, light currents of air occasionally swept across the bay, bringing with them the fresh odor from the shore, but their flitting irregularity too surely foretold them to be the expiring breath of the land-breeze. The roaring of the surf, as it rolled on the margin of the bay, produced a dull, monotonous sound, that was only interrupted, at times, by a hollow bellowing, as a larger wave than usual broke violently against some cavity in the rock. Everything, in short, united to render the scene gloomy and portentous, without creating instant terror, for the ship rose easily on the long billows, without even straightening the heavy cable that held her to her anchor.

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[48] The legend is that Boabdil burst into tears at his last sight of Granada and that his mother, who accompanied him, said, "You do well to weep as a woman over what you could not defend as a man."

[1] Cooper, in his preface to *The Pilot*, says: "*The Pilot* was published in 1823. This was not long after the appearance of *The Pirate*, a work which, it is hardly necessary to remind the reader, has a direct connection with the sea In a conversation with a friend, a man of pol-

The higher officers were collected around the capstan, engaged in earnest discourse about their situation and prospects, while some of the oldest and most favored seamen would extend their short walk to the hallowed precincts of the quarter-deck, to catch with greedy ears the opinions that fell from their superiors. Numberless were the uneasy glances that were thrown from both officers and men at their commander and the Pilot, who still continued their secret communion in a distant part of the vessel. Once, an ungovernable curiosity, or the heedlessness of his years, led one of the youthful midshipmen near them, but a stern rebuke from his captain sent the boy, abashed and cowering, to hide his mortification among his fellows. This reprimand was received by the elder officers as an intimation that the consultation which they beheld was to be strictly inviolate; and, though it by no means suppressed the repeated expressions of their impatience, it effectually prevented an interruption to the communications which all, however, thought were unreasonably protracted for the occasion.

"This is no time to be talking over bearings and distances," observed the officer next in rank to Griffith; "but we should call the hands up, and try to kedge[4] her off while the sea will suffer a boat to live."

ished taste and extensive reading, the authorship of the Scottish novels came under discussion. The claims of Sir Walter were a little distrusted, on account of the peculiar and minute information that the romances were then very generally thought to display. *The Pirate* was cited as a very marked instance of this universal knowledge, and it was wondered where a man of Scott's habits and associations could have become so familiar with the sea. The writer had frequently observed that there was much looseness in this universal knowledge, and that the secret of its success was to be traced to the power of creating that *vraisemblance*, which is so remarkably exhibited in those world-renowned fictions, rather than to any very accurate information on the part of their author. It would have been hypercritical to object to *The Pirate*, that it was not strictly nautical, or true in its details; but, when the reverse was urged as a proof of what, considering the character of other portions of the work, would have been most extraordinary attainments, it was a sort of provocation to dispute the seamanship of *The Pirate*, a quality to which the book has certainly very little just pretension. The result of this conversation was a sudden determination to produce a work which, if it had no other merit, might present truer pictures of the ocean and ships than any that are to be found in *The Pirate*. To this unpremeditated decision, purely an impulse, is not only *The Pilot* due, but a tolerably numerous school of nautical romances that have succeeded it."

The Pilot introduces, in the character of the pilot, John Paul Jones, famous in American naval battles of the Revolution. Jones, a native of the British sea coast, performed many daring feats in English and Irish harbors and waters as commander of American ships of war, and is perhaps the only commander of a foreign military force to land and capture a fortified place on English soil from the time of William the Conqueror to the present. His daring was so great that a plan was really undertaken for his landing in England and capturing the persons of several English officials to be held in exchange for American officers in British prisons. The plan was not carried out, but Cooper uses it as the germ idea of the plot of *The Pilot*.

When the extract here given opens, Captain Munson, commander of a squadron consisting of an unnamed frigate and the schooner *Ariel*, has worked his two ships into a narrow and dangerous bay on the Northumberland coast. Here the pilot, Gray (Jones) has just been taken aboard after some delay, which, in combination with the state of the tide, the darkness, and the eastern gale, would have made the task of working the ships out to sea impossible to anyone lacking his perfect knowledge of the channel and the currents. The pilot is in disguise (his rank and dangerous mission being known only to Captain Munson), and is treated with some contempt by Griffith, first officer of the frigate.

In the following notes, no attempt will be made to explain the nautical terms further than for a bare understanding of the text.

[2] of thread, fabric

[3] *Henry V.*, Act III. (Prologue).

[4] To move a ship against wind or current by means of light kedge anchors carried ahead in boats and dropped, the ship being worked up to these successively by cable and capstan. The same as to warp, or move, as above, by means of a cable attached to a fixed object.

"'Twould be a tedious and bootless job to attempt warping a ship for miles against a head-beating sea," returned the first lieutenant; "but the land-breeze yet flutters aloft, and if our light sails would draw, with the aid of this ebb tide we might be able to shove her from the shore."

"Hail the tops, Griffith," said the other, "and ask if they feel the air above; 'twill be a hint at least to set the old man and that lubberly Pilot in motion."

Griffith laughed as he complied with the request, and when he received the customary reply to his call, he demanded in a loud voice,—

"Which way have you the wind, aloft?"

"We feel a light cat's-paw, now and then, from the land, sir," returned the sturdy captain of the top; "but our top-sail hangs in the clew-lines, sir, without winking."

Captain Munson and his companion suspended their discourse while this question and answer were exchanged, and then resumed their dialogue as earnestly as if it had received no interruption.

"If it did wink, the hint would be lost on our betters," said the officer of the marines, whose ignorance of seamanship added greatly to his perception of the danger, but who, from pure idleness, made more jokes than any other man in the ship. "That Pilot would not receive a delicate intimation through his ears, Mr. Griffith; suppose you try him by the nose."

"Faith, there was a flash of gunpowder between us in the barge," returned the first lieutenant, "and he does not seem a man to stomach such hints as you advise. Although he looks so meek and quiet, I doubt whether he has paid much attention to the book of Job."

"Why should he?" exclaimed the chaplain, whose apprehensions at least equaled those of the marine, and with a much more disheartening effect; "I am sure it would have been a great waste of time: there are so many charts of the coast, and books on the navigation of these seas, for him to study, that I sincerely hope he has been much better employed."[5]

A loud laugh was created at this speech among the listeners, and it apparently produced the effect that was so long anxiously desired, by putting an end to the mysterious conference between their captain and the pilot. As the former came forward towards his expecting crew, he said, in the composed, steady manner that formed the principal trait in his character,—

"Get the anchor, Mr. Griffith, and make sail on the ship; the hour has arrived when we must be moving."

The cheerful "Aye, aye, sir!" of the young lieutenant was hardly uttered, before the cries of half a dozen midshipmen were heard summoning the boatswain and his mates to their duty.

There was a general movement in the living masses that clustered around the mainmast, on the booms, and in the gangways, though their habits of discipline held the crew a moment longer in suspense. The silence was first broken by the sound of the boatswain's whistle, followed by the hoarse cry of "All hands, up anchor, ahoy!" the former rising on the night air from its first low mellow notes to a piercing shrillness that gradually died away on the waters and the latter bellowing through every cranny of the ship, like the hollow murmurs of distant thunder.

The change produced by the customary summons was magical. Human beings sprang out from between the guns, rushed up the hatches, threw themselves with careless activity from the booms, and gathered from every quarter so rapidly, that in an instant, the deck of the frigate was alive with men. The profound silence that had hitherto been only interrupted by the low dialogue of the officers was now changed for the stern orders of the lieutenants, mingled with the shriller cries of the midshipmen, and the hoarse bawling of the boatswain's crew, rising above the tumult of preparation and general bustle.

The captain and the Pilot alone remained passive, in this scene of general exertion; for apprehension had even stimulated that class of officers which is called "idlers" to unusual activity, though frequently reminded by their more experienced messmates that, instead of aiding, they retarded the duty of the vessel. The bustle, however, gradually ceased, and in a few minutes, the same silence pervaded the ship as before.

"We are brought-to,[6] sir," said Griffith, who stood overlooking the scene, holding in one hand a short speaking-trumpet, and grasping with the other one of the shrouds of the ship, to steady himself in the position he had taken on a gun.

"Heave round, sir," was the calm reply.

"Heave round!" repeated Griffith, aloud.

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[5] Cooper is generally, as here, laborious and awkward in his expression of the humorous.

[6] The slack of the cable taken up.

"Heave round!" echoed a dozen eager voices at once, and the lively strains of a fife struck up a brisk air, to enliven the labor. The capstan was instantly set in motion, and the measured tread of the seamen was heard, as they stamped the deck in the circle of their march. For a few minutes no other sounds were heard, if we except the voice of an officer, occasionally cheering the sailors, when it was announced that they "were short"; or, in other words, that the ship was nearly over her anchor.

"Heave and pawl,"[7] cried Griffith; when the quivering notes of the whistle were again succeeded by a general stillness in the vessel.

"What is to be done now, sir?" continued the lieutenant; "shall we trip[8] the anchor? There seems not a breath of air; and as the tide runs slack, I doubt whether the sea do not heave the ship ashore."

There was so much obvious truth in this conjecture, that all eyes turned from the light and animation afforded by the decks of the frigate, to look abroad on the waters, in a vain desire to pierce the darkness, as if to read the fate of their apparently devoted ship, from the aspect of nature.

"I leave all to the Pilot," said the captain, after he had stood a short time by the side of Griffith, anxiously studying the heavens and the ocean. "What say you, Mr. Gray?"

The man who was thus addressed by name was leaning over the bulwarks, with his eyes bent in the same direction as the others; but as he answered he turned his face towards the speaker, and the light from the deck fell full upon his quiet features, which exhibited a calmness bordering on the supernatural, considering his station and responsibility.

"There is much to fear from this heavy ground-swell," he said, in the same unmoved tones as before; "but there is certain destruction to us, if the gale that is brewing in the east finds us waiting its fury in this wild anchorage. All the hemp that ever was spun into cordage would not hold a ship an hour, chafing on these rocks, with a northeaster pouring its fury on her. If the powers of man can compass it, gentlemen, we must get an offing, and that speedily."

"You say no more, sir, than the youngest boy in the ship can see for himself," said Griffith; "ha! here comes the schooner!"

The dashing of the long sweeps in the water was now plainly audible, and the little *Ariel*[9] was seen through the gloom, moving heavily under their feeble impulse. As she passed slowly under the stern of the frigate, the cheerful voice of Barnstable was first heard, opening the communications between them.

"Here's a night for spectacles, Captain Munson!" he cried; "but I thought I heard your fife, sir. I trust in God, you do not mean to ride it out here till morning?"

"I like the berth as little as yourself, Mr. Barnstable," returned the veteran seaman, in his calm manner, in which anxiety was, however, beginning to grow evident. "We are short; but are afraid to let go our hold of the bottom, lest the sea cast us ashore. How make you out the wind?"

"Wind!" echoed the other; "there is not enough to blow a lady's curl aside. If you wait, sir, till the land-breeze fills your sails, you will wait another moon. I believe I've got my egg-shell out of that nest of gray-caps; but how it has been done in the dark, a better man than myself must explain."

"Take your directions from the Pilot, Mr. Barnstable," returned his commanding officer, "and follow them strictly and to the letter."

A deathlike silence, in both vessels, succeeded this order; for all seemed to listen eagerly to catch the words that fell from the man on whom, even the boys now felt, depended their only hopes for safety. A short time was suffered to elapse, before his voice was heard, in the same low but distinct tones as before:—

"Your sweeps will soon be of no service to you," he said, "against the sea that begins to heave in; but your light sails will help them to get you out. So long as you can head east-and-by-north, you are doing well, and you can stand on till you open[10] the light from that northern headland, when you can heave to, and fire a gun; but if, as I dread, you are struck aback[11] before you open the light, you may trust to your lead on the larboard tack; but beware, with your head to the southward, for no lead will serve you there."

"I can walk over the same ground on one

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[7] Heave on the capstan and let what is gained be secured by means of the pawls working in the ratchet at its base.

[8] lift from the bottom

[9] The schooner *Ariel* in command of Lieutenant Barnstable was so light that it could be moved by long sweeps or oars.

[10] Come in view of, past some obstruction, as a headland.

[11] Struck with a wind which impinges on the side of the sails opposite to that on which it blew at first, and tends to stop the ship.

tack as on the other," said Barnstable, "and make both legs of a length."[12]

"It will not do," returned the Pilot. "If you fall off a point to starboard from east-and-by-north, in going large,[13] you will find both rocks and points of shoals to bring you up; and beware, as I tell you, of the starboard tack."

"And how shall I find my way? you will let me trust to neither time, lead, nor log."

"You must trust to a quick eye and a ready hand. The breakers only will show you the dangers, when you are not able to make out the bearings of the land. Tack in season, sir, and don't spare the lead when you head to port."

"Aye, aye," returned Barnstable, in a low, muttering voice. "This is a sort of blind navigation with a vengeance, and all for no purpose that I can see—see! damme, eyesight is of about as much use now as a man's nose would be in reading the Bible."

"Softly, softly, Mr. Barnstable," interrupted his commander,—for such was the anxious stillness in both vessels that even the rattling of the schooner's rigging was heard, as she rolled in the trough of the sea,—"the duty on which Congress has sent us must be performed, at the hazard of our lives."

"I don't mind my life, Captain Munson," said Barnstable, "but there is a great want of conscience in trusting a vessel in such a place as this. However, it is a time to do, and not to talk. But if there be such danger to an easy draught of water, what will become of the frigate? had I not better play jackal, and try and feel the way for you?"

"I thank you," said the Pilot; "the offer is generous, but would avail us nothing. I have the advantage of knowing the ground well, and must trust to my memory and God's good favor. Make sail, make sail, sir, and if you succeed, we will venture to break ground."

The order was promptly obeyed, and in a very short time the *Ariel* was covered with canvas. Though no air was perceptible on the decks of the frigate, the little schooner was so light, that she succeeded in stemming her way over the rising waves, aided a little by the tide; and in a few minutes her low hull was just discernible in the streak of light along the horizon, with the dark outline of her sails rising above the sea, until their fanciful summits were lost in the shadows of the clouds.

Griffith had listened to the foregoing dialogue like the rest of the junior officers, in profound silence; but when the *Ariel* began to grow indistinct to the eye, he jumped lightly from the gun to the deck, and cried,—

"She slips off, like a vessel from the stocks! shall I trip the anchor, sir, and follow?"

"We have no choice," replied his captain. "You hear the question, Mr. Gray? shall we let go the bottom?"

"It must be done, Captain Munson; we may want more drift than the rest of this tide to get us to a place of safety," said the Pilot. "I would give five years from a life that I know will be short, if the ship lay one mile further seaward."

This remark was unheard by all, except the commander of the frigate, who again walked aside with the Pilot, where they resumed their mysterious communications. The words of assent were no sooner uttered, however, than Griffith gave forth from his trumpet the command to "Heave away!" Again the strains of the fife were followed by the tread of the men at the capstan. At the same time that the anchor was heaving up, the sails were loosened from the yards, and opened to invite the breeze. In effecting this duty, orders were thundered through the trumpet of the first lieutenant, and executed with the rapidity of thought. Men were to be seen, like spots in the dim light from the heavens, lying on every yard, or hanging as in air, while strange cries were heard issuing from every part of the rigging, and each spar of the vessel. "Ready the fore-royal," cried a shrill voice, as if from the clouds; "Ready the fore-yard," uttered the hoarser tones of a seaman beneath him; "All ready aft, sir," cried a third, from another quarter; and in a few minutes the order was given to "Let fall."

The little light which fell from the sky was now excluded by the falling canvas, and a deeper gloom was cast athwart the decks of the ship, that served to render the brilliancy of the lanterns even vivid, while it gave to objects outboard a more appalling and dreary appearance than before.

Every individual, excepting the commander and his associate, was now earnestly engaged in getting the ship under way. The sounds of "We're away," were repeated by a burst from fifty voices, and the rapid evolutions of the capstan announced that nothing but the weight of the anchor was to be lifted. The hauling of cordage, the rattling of blocks, blended with the shrill calls of the boatswain and his mates, succeeded; and though to a landsman all would have appeared confusion and hurry, long practice and strict discipline enabled the crew to exhibit their ship under a cloud of canvas, from her deck to the trucks, in less time than we have consumed in relating it.

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[12] Make both courses of a ship, to starboard or port (larboard), as she tacks against a head wind, of equal length.

[13] Not sailing so closely as possible toward the direction of the wind.

For a few minutes, the officers were not disappointed by the result; for though the heavy sails flapped lazily against the masts, the light duck on the loftier spars swelled outwardly, and the ship began sensibly to yield to their influence.

"She travels! she travels!" exclaimed Griffith, joyously; "ah, the hussy! she has as much antipathy to the land as any fish that swims: it blows a little gale aloft, yet!"

"We feel its dying breath," said the Pilot, in low, soothing tones, but in a manner so sudden as to startle Griffith, at whose elbow they were unexpectedly uttered. "Let us forget, young man, everything but the number of lives that depend, this night, on your exertions and my knowledge."

"If you be but half as able to exhibit the one, as I am willing to make the other, we shall do well," returned the lieutenant, in the same tone. "Remember, whatever may be your feelings, that *we* are on an enemy's coast, and love it not enough to wish to lay our bones there."

With this brief explanation they separated, the vessel requiring the constant and close attention of the officer to her movements.

The exultation produced in the crew by the progress of their ship through the water was of short duration; for the breeze that had seemed to await their motions, after forcing the vessel for a quarter of a mile, fluttered for a few minutes amid their light canvas, and then left them entirely. The quartermaster, whose duty it was to superintend the helm, soon announced that he was losing the command of the vessel, as she was no longer obedient to her rudder. This ungrateful intelligence was promptly communicated to his commander by Griffith, who suggested the propriety of again dropping an anchor.

"I refer you to Mr. Gray," returned the captain; "he is the pilot, sir, and with him rests the safety of the vessel."

"Pilots sometimes lose ships as well as save them," said Griffith: "know you the man well, Captain Munson, who holds all our lives in his keeping, and so coolly as if he cared but little for the venture?"

"Mr. Griffith, I do know him; he is, in my opinion, both competent and faithful. Thus much I tell you, to relieve your anxiety; more you must not ask; but is there not a shift of wind?"

"God forbid!" exclaimed his lieutenant; "if that northeaster catches us within the shoals, our case will be desperate indeed!"

The heavy rolling of the vessel caused an occasional expansion, and as sudden a reaction, in their sails, which left the oldest seaman in the ship in doubt which way the currents of air were passing, or whether there existed any that were not created by the flapping of their own canvas. The head of the ship, however, began to fall off from the sea, and notwithstanding the darkness, it soon became apparent that she was driving in, bodily, towards the shore.

During these few minutes of gloomy doubt, Griffith, by one of those sudden revulsions of the mind that connect the opposite extremes of feeling, lost his animated anxiety, and relapsed into the listless apathy that so often came over him, even in the most critical moments of trial and danger. He was standing with one elbow resting on his capstan, shading his eyes from the light of the battle-lantern that stood near him with one hand, when he felt a gentle pressure of the other that recalled his recollection. Looking affectionately, though still recklessly, at the boy who stood at his side, he said,—

"Dull music, Mr. Merry."

"So dull, sir, that I can't dance to it," returned the midshipman. "Nor do I believe there is a man in the ship who would not rather hear 'The Girl I left Behind me,' than those execrable sounds."

"What sounds, boy? The ship is as quiet as the Quaker meeting in the Jerseys, before your good old grandfather used to break the charm of silence with his sonorous voice."

"Ah! laugh at my peaceable blood, if thou wilt, Mr. Griffith," said the arch youngster; "but remember, there is a mixture of it in all sorts of veins. I wish I could hear one of the old gentleman's chants now, sir; I could always sleep to them like a gull in the surf. But he that sleeps tonight with that lullaby, will make a nap of it."

"Sounds! I hear no sounds, boy, but the flapping aloft; even that Pilot, who struts the quarter-deck like an admiral, has nothing to say."

"Is not that a sound to open a seaman's ear?"

"It is in truth a heavy roll of the surf, lad, but the night air carries it heavily to our ears. Know you not the sound of the surf yet, younker?"

"I know it too well, Mr. Griffith, and do not wish to know it better. How fast are we tumbling in towards that surf, sir?"

"I think we hold our own," said Griffith, rousing again; "though we had better anchor. Luff, fellow, luff; you are broadside to the sea!"

The man at the wheel repeated his former intelligence, adding a suggestion, that he thought the ship 'was gathering stern-way.'

"Haul up your courses,[14] Mr. Griffith," said Captain Munson, "and let us feel the wind."

The rattling of the blocks was soon heard, and the enormous sheets of canvas that hung from the lower yards were instantly suspended "in the brails." When this change was effected, all on board stood silent and breathless, as if expecting to learn their fate by the result. Several contradictory opinions were at length hazarded among the officers, when Griffith seized the candle from the lantern, and springing on one of the guns, held it on high, exposed to the action of the air. The little flame waved, with uncertain glimmering, for a moment, and then burned steadily, in a line with the masts. Griffith was about to lower his extended arm, when, feeling a slight sensation of coolness on his hand, he paused, and the light turned slowly towards the land, flared, flickered, and finally deserted the wick.

"Lose not a moment, Mr. Griffith," cried the Pilot aloud; "clew up and furl everything but your three topsails, and let them be double-reefed. Now is the time to fulfill your promise."

The young man paused one moment, in astonishment, as the clear, distinct tones of the stranger struck his ears so unexpectedly; but turning his eyes to seaward, he sprang on the deck, and proceeded to obey the order, as if life and death depended on his dispatch.

CHAPTER V

> She rights! she rights, boys! wear[15] off shore.
> *Song.*

The extraordinary activity of Griffith, which communicated itself with promptitude to the crew, was produced by a sudden alteration in the weather. In place of the well defined streak along the horizon, that has been already described, an immense body of misty light appeared to be moving in, with rapidity, from the ocean, while a distinct but distant roaring announced the sure approach of the tempest that had so long troubled the waters. Even Griffith, while thundering his orders through the trumpet and urging the men by his cries to expedition, would pause, for instants, to cast anxious glances in the direction of the coming storm; and the faces of the sailors who lay on the yards were turned, instinctively, towards the same quarter of the heavens, while they knotted the reef-points, or passed the gaskets that were to confine the unruly canvas to the prescribed limits.

The Pilot alone, in that confused and busy throng, where voice arose above voice, and cry echoed cry in quick succession, appeared as if he held no interest in the important stake. With his eyes steadily fixed on the approaching mist, and his arms folded together in composure, he stood calmly waiting the result.

The ship had fallen off with her broadside to the sea, and was become unmanageable, and the sails were already brought into the folds necessary to her security, when the quick and heavy fluttering of canvas was thrown across the water with all the gloomy and chilling sensations that such sounds produce, where darkness and danger unite to appall the seaman.

"The schooner has it!" cried Griffith; "Barnstable has held on, like himself, to the last moment. God send that the squall leave him cloth enough to keep him from the shore!"

"His sails are easily handled," the commander observed, "and she must be over the principal danger. We are falling off before it, Mr. Gray; shall we try a cast of the lead?"

The Pilot turned from his contemplative posture, and moved slowly across the deck before he returned any reply to this question, like a man who not only felt that everything depended on himself, but that he was equal to the emergency.

"'Tis unnecessary," he at length said; "'twould be certain destruction to be taken aback; and it is difficult to say, within several points, how the wind may strike us."

"'Tis difficult no longer," cried Griffith; "for here it comes, and in right earnest!"

The rushing sounds of the wind were now, indeed, heard at hand; and the words were hardly past the lips of the young lieutenant, before the vessel bowed down heavily to one side, and then, as she began to move through the water, rose again majestically to her upright position, as if saluting, like a courteous champion, the powerful antagonist with which she was about to contend. Not another minute elapsed before the ship was throwing the water aside, with a lively progress, and, obedient to her helm, was brought as near to the desired course as the direction of the wind would allow. The hurry and bustle on the yards gradually subsided, and the men slowly descended to the deck, all straining their eyes to pierce the gloom in which they were enveloped, and some shaking their heads, in melancholy doubt, afraid to express the apprehensions they really entertained. All on board anxiously waited for the fury of the gale; for there were none so ignorant or inexperienced in that gallant frigate, as not to know that as yet they only felt the infant efforts of the wind. Each moment, however, it increased in power, though so gradual was the alteration that the relieved mariners began to believe that all their gloomy forebodings were not to be realized. During this short interval of uncertainty, no other sounds were heard than the whistling of the breeze as it passed quickly through the mass of rigging that belonged to the vessel, and the dashing of the spray that began to fly from her bows like the foam of a cataract.

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[14] Haul up the lower fore and main sails to the yards. The sails prevented the officers on deck from judging the direction of the very slight breeze.

[15] When beating against the wind, to change the ship to the other course by steering away from the wind and turning the ship around.

"It blows fresh," cried Griffith, who was the first to speak in that moment of doubt and anxiety; "but it is no more than a capful of wind after all. Give us elbow-room, and the right canvas, Mr. Pilot, and I'll handle the ship like a gentleman's yacht, in this breeze."

"Will she stay, think ye, under this sail?" said the low voice of the stranger.

"She will do all that man, in reason, can ask of wood and iron," returned the lieutenant; "but the vessel don't float the ocean that will tack under double-reefed topsails alone, against a heavy sea. Help her with the courses,[16] Pilot, and you shall see her come round like a dancing-master."

"Let us feel the strength of the gale first," returned the man who was called Mr. Gray, moving from the side of Griffith to the weather gangway of the vessel, where he stood in silence, looking ahead of the ship, with an air of singular coolness and abstraction.

All the lanterns had been extinguished on the deck of the frigate, when her anchor was secured, and as the first mist of the gale had passed over, it was succeeded by a faint light that was a good deal aided by the glittering foam of the waters, which now broke in white curls around the vessel in every direction. The land could be faintly discerned, rising like a heavy bank of black fog, above the margin of the waters, and was only distinguishable from the heavens by its deeper gloom and obscurity. The last rope was coiled and deposited in its proper place by the seamen, and for several minutes the stillness of death pervaded the crowded decks. It was evident to everyone that their ship was dashing at a prodigious rate through the waves and as she was approaching, with such velocity, the quarter of the bay where the shoals and dangers were known to be situated, nothing but the habits of the most exact discipline could suppress the uneasiness of the officers and men within their own bosoms. At length the voice of Captain Munson was heard, calling to the Pilot.

"Shall I send a hand into the chains, Mr. Gray," he said, "and try our water?"

Although this question was asked aloud, and the interest it excited drew many of the officers and men around him in eager impatience for his answer it was unheeded by the man to whom it was addressed. His head rested on his hand, as he leaned over the hammock-cloths[17] of the vessel, and his whole air was that of one whose thoughts wandered from the pressing necessity of their situation. Griffith was among those who had approached the Pilot; and after waiting a moment, from respect, to hear the answer to his commander's question, he presumed on his own rank, and leaving the circle that stood at a little distance, stepped to the side of the mysterious guardian of their lives.

"Captain Munson desires to know whether you wish a cast of the lead," said the young officer, with a little impatience of manner. No immediate answer was made to this repetition of the question, and Griffith laid his hand unceremoniously on the shoulder of the other, with an intent to rouse him before he made another application for a reply, but the convulsive start of the Pilot held him silent in amazement.

"Fall back there," said the lieutenant, sternly, to the men who were closing around them in a compact circle; "away with you to your stations, and see all clear for stays."[18]

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[16] lower fore and main sails

[17] Tarpaulins covering the hammocks which were stowed, when not in use, in the bulwarks of the old men-of-war.

[18] ready for executing the maneuver of tacking.

The dense mass of heads dissolved, at this order, like the water of one of the waves commingling with the ocean, and the lieutenant and his companion were left by themselves.

"This is not a time for musing, Mr. Gray," continued Griffith; "remember our compact, and look to your charge; is it not time to put the vessel in stays? Of what are you dreaming?"

The Pilot laid his hand on the extended arm of the lieutenant and grasped it with a convulsive pressure, as he answered,—

"'Tis a dream of reality. You are young, Mr. Griffith, nor am I past the noon of life; but should you live fifty years longer, you never can see and experience what I have encountered in my little period of three-and-thirty years!"

A good deal astonished at this burst of feeling, so singular at such a moment, the young sailor was at a loss for a reply; but as his duty was uppermost in his thoughts, he still dwelt on the theme that most interested him.

"I hope much of your experience has been on this coast, for the ship travels lively," he said, "and the daylight showed us so much to dread that we do not feel over valiant in the dark. How much longer shall we stand on, upon this tack?"

The Pilot turned slowly from the side of the vessel, and walked towards the commander of the frigate, as he replied, in a tone that seemed deeply agitated by his melancholy reflections,—

"You have your wish, then; much, very much of my early life was passed on this dreaded coast. What to you is all darkness and gloom, to me is light as if a noon-day sun shone upon it. But tack your ship, sir, tack your ship; I would see how she works before we reach the point where she *must* behave well, or we perish."

Griffith gazed after him in wonder, while the Pilot slowly paced the quarter-deck, and then, rousing from his trance, gave forth the cheering order that called each man to his station to perform the desired evolution. The confident assurances which the young officer had given to the Pilot respecting the qualities of his vessel, and his own ability to manage her, were fully realized by the result. The helm was no sooner put a-lee, than the huge ship bore up gallantly against the wind, and, dashing directly through the waves, threw the foam high into the air as she looked boldly into the very eye of the wind; and then, yielding gracefully to its power, she fell off on the other tack, with her head pointed from those dangerous shoals that she had so recently approached with such terrifying velocity. The heavy yards swung round, as if they had been vanes to indicate the currents of air; and in a few moments the frigate again moved, with stately progress, through the water, leaving the rocks and shoals behind her on one side of the bay, but advancing towards those that offered equal danger on the other.

During this time the sea was becoming more agitated, and the violence of the wind was gradually increasing. The latter no longer whistled amid the cordage of the vessel, but it seemed to howl, surlily, as it passed the complicated machinery that the frigate obtruded on its path. An endless succession of white surges rose above the heavy billows, and the very air was glittering with the light that was disengaged from the ocean. The ship yielded, each moment, more and more before the storm, and in less than half an hour from the time that she had lifted her anchor, she was driven along with tremendous fury by the full power of a gale of wind. Still, the hardy and experienced mariners who directed her movements held her to the course that was necessary to their preservation, and still Griffith gave forth, when directed by their unknown Pilot, those orders that turned her in the narrow channel where alone safety was to be found.

So far, the performance of his duty appeared easy to the stranger, and he gave the required directions in those still, calm tones, that formed so remarkable a contrast to the responsibility of his situation. But when the land was becoming dim, in distance as well as darkness, and the agitated sea alone was to be discovered as it swept by them in foam, he broke in upon the monotonous roaring of the tempest with the sounds of his voice, seeming to shake off his apathy and rouse himself to the occasion.

"Now is the time to watch her closely, Mr. Griffith," he cried; "here we get the true tide and the real danger. Place the best quartermaster of your ship in those chains, and let an officer stand by him, and see that he gives us the right water."

"I will take that office on myself," said the captain, "pass a light into the weather main-chains."

"Stand by your braces!"[19] exclaimed the Pilot, with startling quickness. "Heave away that lead!"

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[19] Ropes from the yards to the deck, holding the yards in a given direction

These preparations taught the crew to expect the crisis, and every officer and man stood in fearful silence, at his assigned station, awaiting the issue of the trial. Even the quartermaster at the con gave out his orders to the men at the wheel, in deeper and hoarser tones than usual, as if anxious not to disturb the quiet and order of the vessel.

While this deep expectation pervaded the frigate, the piercing cry of the leadsman, as he called "By the mark seven," rose above the tempest, crossed over the decks, and appeared to pass away to leeward, borne on the blast like the warnings of some water spirit.

"'Tis well," returned the Pilot calmly; "try it again."

The short pause was succeeded by another cry, "And a half-five!"

"She shoals! she shoals!" exclaimed Griffith; "keep her a good full."[20]

"Aye! you must hold the vessel in command, now," said the Pilot, with those cool tones that are most appalling in critical moments, because they seem to denote most preparation and care.

The third call, "By the deep four!" was followed by a prompt direction from the stranger to tack.

Griffith seemed to emulate the coolness of the Pilot, in issuing the necessary orders to execute this maneuver.

The vessel rose slowly from the inclined position into which she had been forced by the tempest, and the sails were shaking violently, as if to release themselves from their confinement, while the ship stemmed the billows, when the well-known voice of the sailing-master was heard shouting from the forecastle,—

"Breakers! breakers, dead ahead!"

This appalling sound seemed yet to be lingering about the ship, when a second voice cried,—

"Breakers on our lee-bow!"

"We are in the bight of the shoals, Mr. Gray," cried the commander. "She loses her way; perhaps an anchor might hold her."

"Clear away that best bower!"[21] shouted Griffith through his trumpet.

"Hold on!" cried the Pilot, in a voice that reached the very hearts of all who heard him; "hold on everything."

The young man turned fiercely to the daring stranger who thus defied the discipline of his vessel, and at once demanded,—

"Who is it that dares to countermand my orders? is it not enough that you run the ship into danger, but you must interfere to keep her there? If another word"—

"Peace, Mr. Griffith," interrupted the captain, bending from the rigging, his gray locks blowing about in the wind, and adding a look of wildness to the haggard care that he exhibited by the light of the lantern; "yield the trumpet to Mr. Gray; he alone can save us."

Griffith threw his speaking-trumpet on the deck, and as he walked proudly away, muttered in bitterness of feeling,—

"Then all is lost, indeed! and among the rest, the foolish hopes with which I visited this coast."

There was, however, no time for reply; the ship had been rapidly running into the wind, and as the efforts of the crew were paralyzed by the contradictory orders they had heard, she gradually lost her way, and in a few seconds all her sails were taken aback.

Before the crew understood their situation, the Pilot had applied the trumpet to his mouth, and in a voice that rose above the tempest, he thundered forth his orders. Each command was given distinctly, and with a precision that showed him to be master of his profession. The helm was kept fast, the head yards swung up heavily against the wind, and the vessel was soon whirling round on her heel, with a retrograde movement.

Griffith was too much of a seaman not to perceive that the Pilot had seized, with a perception almost intuitive, the only method that promised to extricate the vessel from her situation. He was young, impetuous, and proud—but he was also generous. Forgetting his resentment and his mortification, he rushed forward among the men, and, by his presence and example, added certainty to the experiment. The ship fell off slowly before the gale, and bowed her yards nearly to the water, as she felt the blast pouring its fury on her broadside, while the surly waves beat violently against her stern, as if in reproach at departing from her usual manner of moving.

The voice of the Pilot, however, was still heard, steady and calm, and yet so clear and high as to reach every ear; and the obedient seamen whirled the yards at his bidding, in despite of the tempest, as if they handled the toys of their childhood. When the ship had fallen off dead before the wind, her head-sails were shaken, her after-yards trimmed, and her helm shifted, before she had time to run upon the danger that had threatened, as well to leeward as to windward. The beautiful fabric, obedient to her government, threw her bows up gracefully towards the wind again; and, as her sails were trimmed, moved out from amongst the dangerous shoals in which she had been embayed, as steadily and swiftly as she had approached them.

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[20] Keep all sails full by sailing not too close to the wind.

[21] largest anchor

A moment of breathless astonishment succeeded the accomplishment of this nice maneuver, but there was no time for the usual expressions of surprise. The stranger still held the trumpet, and continued to lift his voice amid the howlings of the blast, whenever prudence or skill required any change in the management of the ship. For an hour longer there was a fearful struggle for their preservation, the channel becoming at each step more complicated, and the shoals thickening around the mariners on every side. The lead was cast rapidly, and the quick eye of the Pilot seemed to pierce the darkness with a keenness of vision that exceeded human power. It was apparent to all in the vessel that they were under the guidance of one who understood the navigation thoroughly, and their exertions kept pace with their reviving confidence. Again and again the frigate appeared to be rushing blindly on shoals where the sea was covered with foam, and where destruction would have been as sudden as it was certain, when the clear voice of the stranger was heard warning them of the danger and inciting them to their duty. The vessel was implicitly yielded to his government; and during those anxious moments when she was dashing the waters aside, throwing the spray over her enormous yards, each ear would listen eagerly for those sounds that had obtained a command over the crew, that can only be acquired, under such circumstances, by great steadiness and consummate skill. The ship was recovering from the inaction of changing her course, in one of those critical tacks that she had made so often, when the Pilot, for the first time, addressed the commander of the frigate, who still continued to superintend the all-important duty of the leadsman."

"Now is the pinch," he said, "and if the ship behaves well, we are safe; but if otherwise, all we have yet done will be useless."

The veteran seaman whom he addressed, left the chains at this portentous notice, and calling to his first lieutenant, required of the stranger an explanation of his warning.

"See you yon light on the southern headland?" returned the Pilot; "you may know it from the star near it, by its sinking, at times, in the ocean. Now observe the hummock a little north of it, looking like a shadow in the horizon; 'tis a hill far inland. If we keep that light open from the hill, we shall do well; but if not, we surely go to pieces."

"Let us tack again!" exclaimed the lieutenant.

The Pilot shook his head as he replied,—

"There is no more tacking or box-hauling[22] to be done tonight. We have barely room to pass out of the shoals on this course; and if we can weather the 'Devil's Grip,' we clear their outermost point; but if not, as I said before, there is but an alternative."

"If we had beaten out the way we entered," exclaimed Griffith, "we should have done well."

"Say, also, if the tide would have let us do so," returned the Pilot, calmly. "Gentlemen, we must be prompt; we have but a mile to go, and the ship appears to fly. That topsail is not enough to keep her up to the wind; we want both jib and mainsail."

"'Tis a perilous thing to loosen canvas in such a tempest!" observed the doubtful captain.

"It must be done," returned the collected stranger; "we perish without it; see! the light already touches the edge of the hummock; the sea casts us to leeward!"

"It shall be done!" cried Griffith, seizing the trumpet from the hand of the Pilot.

The orders of the lieutenant were executed almost as soon as issued; and, everything being ready, the enormous folds of the mainsail were trusted loose to the blast. There was an instant when the result was doubtful; the tremendous threshing of the heavy sail seemed to bid defiance to all restraint, shaking the ship to her center; but art and strength prevailed, and gradually the canvas was distended, and bellying as it filled, was drawn down to its usual place by the power of a hundred men. The vessel yielded to this immense addition of force, and bowed before it like a reed bending to a breeze. But the success of the measure was announced by a joyful cry from the stranger, that seemed to burst from his inmost soul.

"She feels it! she springs her luff![23] observe," he said, "the light opens from the hummock already: if she will only bear her canvas, we shall go clear!'

A report, like that of a cannon, interrupted his exclamation, and something resembling a white cloud was seen drifting before the wind from the head of the ship, till it was driven into the gloom far to leeward.

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[22] A method of coming upon the other tack by steering the ship into the wind and then backing away from the wind in turning.

[23] Sails closer to the wind.

"'Tis the jib, blown from the bolt-ropes," said the commander of the frigate. "This is no time to spread light duck—but the mainsail may stand it yet."

"The sail would laugh at a tornado," returned the lieutenant; "but the mast springs like a piece of steel."

"Silence all!" cried the Pilot. "Now, gentlemen, we shall soon know our fate. Let her luff—luff you can!"[24]

This warning effectually closed all discourse, and the hardy mariners, knowing that they had already done all in the power of man to insure their safety, stood in breathless anxiety awaiting the result. At a short distance ahead of them the whole ocean was white with foam, and the waves instead of rolling on in regular succession, appeared to be tossing about in mad gambols. A single streak of dark billows, not half a cable's length in width, could be discerned running into this chaos of water; but it was soon lost to the eye amid the confusion of the disturbed element. Along this narrow path the vessel moved more heavily than before, being brought so near the wind as to keep her sails touching. The Pilot silently proceeded to the wheel, and, with his own hands, he undertook the steerage of the ship. No noise proceeded from the frigate to interrupt the horrid tumult of the ocean; and she entered the channel among the breakers, with the silence of a desperate calmness. Twenty times, as the foam rolled away to leeward, the crew were on the eve of uttering their joy, as they supposed the vessel past the danger; but breaker after breaker would still heave up before them, following each other into the general mass, to check their exultation. Occasionally, the fluttering of the sails would be heard; and when the looks of the startled seamen were turned to the wheel, they beheld the stranger grasping its spokes, with his quick eye glancing from the water to the canvas. At length the ship reached a point where she appeared to be rushing directly into the jaws of destruction, when suddenly her course was changed, and her head receded rapidly from the wind. At the same instant the voice of the Pilot was heard shouting,—

"Square away the yards!—in mainsail!"

A general burst from the crew echoed, "Square away the yards!" and, quick as thought, the frigate was seen gliding along the channel before the wind. The eye had hardly time to dwell on the foam, which seemed like clouds driving in the heavens, and directly the gallant vessel issued from her perils, and rose and fell on the heavy waves of the sea.

The seamen were yet drawing long breaths, and gazing about them like men recovered from a trance, when Griffith approached the man who had so successfully conducted them through their perils. The lieutenant grasped the hand of the other, as he said,—

"You have this night proved yourself a faithful pilot and such a seaman as the world cannot equal."

The pressure of the hand was warmly returned by the unknown mariner, who replied,—

"I am no stranger to the seas, and I may yet find my grave in them. But you, too, have deceived me; you have acted nobly, young man, and Congress—"

"What of Congress?" asked Griffith, observing him to pause.

"Why, Congress is fortunate if it has many such ships as this," said the stranger, coldly, walking away towards the commander.

Griffith gazed after him a moment in surprise; but, as his duty required his attention, other thoughts soon engaged his mind.

The vessel was pronounced to be in safety. The gale was heavy and increasing, but there was a clear sea before them; and, as she slowly stretched out into the bosom of the ocean, preparations were made for her security during its continuance. Before midnight, everything was in order.

A gun from the *Ariel* soon announced the safety of the schooner also, which had gone out by another and an easier channel that the frigate had not dared to attempt; when the commander directed the usual watch to be set, and the remainder of the crew to seek their necessary repose.

The captain withdrew with the mysterious pilot to his own cabin. Griffith gave his last order; and renewing his charge to the officer instructed with the care of the vessel, he wished him a pleasant watch, and sought the refreshment of his own cot. For an hour the young lieutenant lay musing on the events of the day. The remark of Barnstable would occur to him, in connection with the singular comment of the boy; and then his thoughts would recur to the Pilot, who, taken from the hostile shores of Britain, and with her accent on his tongue, had served them so faithfully and so well. He remembered the anxiety of Captain Munson to procure this stranger, at the very hazard from which they had just been relieved, and puzzled himself with conjecturing why a pilot was to be sought at such a risk. His more private feelings would then resume their sway, and the recollection of America, his mistress, his home, mingled with the confused images of the drowsy youth. The dashing of the billows against the side of the ship, the creaking of guns and bulk-heads, with the roaring of the tempest, however, became gradually less and less distinct, until nature yielded to necessity, and the young man forgot even the romantic images of his love, in the deep sleep of a seaman.

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[24] Come nearer the wind, as close as you can.

. . . .

1823

From THE DEERSLAYER[1]

CHAPTER XXVII

> Thou hast been busy, Death, this day, and yet
> But half thy work is done! The gates of hell
> Are thronged, yet twice ten thousand spirits
> more,
> Who, from their warm and healthful tenements,
> Fear no divorce, must, ere the sun go down,
> Enter the world of woe!
>
> SOUTHEY.

One experienced in the signs of the heavens would have seen that the sun wanted but two or three minutes of the zenith, when Deerslayer landed on the point where the Hurons were now encamped, nearly abreast of the castle. This spot was similar to the one already described, with the exception that the surface of the land was less broken and less crowded with trees. Owing to these two circumstances, it was all the better suited to the purpose for which it had been selected, the space beneath the branches bearing some resemblance to a densely-wooded lawn. Favored by its position and its spring, it had been much resorted to by savages and hunters, and the natural grasses had succeeded their fires, leaving an appearance of sward in places, a very unusual accompaniment of the virgin forest. Nor was the margin of water fringed with bushes as on so much of its shore, but the eye penetrated the woods immediately on reaching the strand, commanding nearly the whole area of the projection.

If it was a point of honor with the Indian warrior to redeem his word, when pledged to return and meet his death at a given hour, so was it a point of characteristic pride to show no womanish impatience, but to reappear as nearly as possible at the appointed moment. It was well not to exceed the grace accorded by the generosity of the enemy, but it was better to meet it to a minute. Something of this dramatic effect mingles with most of the graver usages of the American aborigines, and no doubt—like the prevalence of a similar feeling among people more sophisticated and refined—may be referred to a principle of nature. We all love the wonderful, and when it comes attended by chivalrous self-devotion and a rigid regard to honor, it presents itself to our admiration in a shape doubly attractive. As respects Deerslayer, though he took a pride in showing his white blood, by often deviating from the usages of the red men, he frequently dropped into their customs, and oftener into their feelings, unconsciously to himself, in consequence of having no other arbiters to appeal to than their judgments and tastes. On the present occasion, he would have abstained from betraying a feverish haste by a too speedy return, since it would have contained a tacit admission that the time asked for was more than had been wanted; but, on the other hand, had the idea occurred to him, he would have quickened his movements a little, in order to avoid the dramatic appearance of returning at the precise instant set as the utmost limit of his absence. Still, accident had interfered to defeat the last intention, for when the young man put his foot on the point, and advanced with a steady tread toward the group of chiefs that was seated in grave array on a fallen tree, the oldest of their number cast his eye upward at an opening in the trees, and pointed out to his companions the startling fact that the sun was just entering a space that was known to mark the zenith. A common but low exclamation of surprise and admiration escaped every mouth, and the grim warriors looked at each other; some with envy and disappointment, some with astonishment at the precise accuracy of their victim, and others with a more generous and liberal feeling. The American Indian always deemed his moral victories the noblest, prizing the groans and yielding of his victim under torture more than the trophy of his scalp; and the trophy itself more than his life. To slay, and not to bring off the proof of victory, indeed, was scarcely deemed honorable; even these rude and fierce tenants of the forest, like their more nurtured brethren of the court and the camp, having set up for themselves imaginary and arbitrary points of honor, to supplant the conclusions of the right and the decisions of reason.

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[1] The *Deerslayer* is placed before *The Prairie* because, though last in date of composition, it is first in epic order of the Leatherstocking Tales. These tales vary in scene and in characters, but they work out a unified theme, the contact of the red man with the white, at the shifting border of American settlement, from the Mohawk to the Platte. (See Newcomer's *American Literature*, p. 85.) One character, Natty Bumppo, or Leatherstocking, or Deerslayer, as he is variously called, runs through all the tales. He has been brought up among the Delaware Indians, and has, at the beginning of the present tale, come to Otsego Lake in the central part of the present state of New York. The time is the beginning of the French and Indian War and the region is a wilderness. Here he is to meet a young Delaware chief, Chingachgook, or The Serpent, of the renowned Uncas family, whose betrothed, Hist, or Wah-ta-Wah, has been, through the connivance of the traitor Briarthorn, stolen away and adopted by the Hurons, a tribe of the Iroquois or Mingo Confederacy. The only settlers at the lake are the old trapper, Hutter, and his two daughters, the beautiful Judith and the feeble-minded Hester. This family, for protection from the Indians, lives in the "castle," a lake-dwelling on piles, or sometimes in the "ark," a rude house-boat. Just as Deerslayer arrives at the lake in the company of Harry Hurry, a reckless frontiersman, a party of Hurons attempts to surprise the lake-dwellers. Hutter and Hurry, against the protest of Deerslayer, risk a night attack on these Indians for the sake of the scalp-bounty. They are themselves captured, but Deerslayer manages to negotiate their release in exchange for four curiously carved ivory chess-men in the form of elephants, that he finds, together with rich articles of dress, in a mysterious chest of Hutter's. A day or two later the Hurons attack the "castle" and kill and scalp Hutter. Deerslayer and Chingachgook, finding that Hist is captive in this same camp of Hurons, steal upon the camp at night, and snatch Hist away; but Deerslayer is himself made captive. The following day the Hurons release him on twenty-four hours' furlough: if Hist is returned to the Hurons and Judith and Hester will also go with the Hurons, Deerslayer is to be free. These conditions none will accept, much less will Deerslayer advise them, and he himself, true to his word, returns to the Huron camp at the edge of the lake to undergo, as he has every reason to expect, death by torture as a captive enemy. The selection above begins as he sets foot among the savages. These have just begun to suspect that their presence may be known at the frontier posts, and are in some haste to set out on their return to Canada.

The Hurons had been divided in their opinions concerning the probability of their captive's return. Most among them, indeed, had not expected it possible for a paleface to come back voluntarily, and meet the known penalties of an Indian torture; but a few of the seniors expected better things from one who had already shown himself so singularly cool, brave, and upright. The party had come to its decision, however, less in the expectation of finding the pledge redeemed, than in the hope of disgracing the Delawares by casting into their teeth the delinquency of one bred in their villages. They would have greatly preferred that Chingachgook should be their prisoner, and prove the traitor; but the paleface scion of the hated stock was no bad substitute for their purposes, failing in their designs against the ancient stem. With a view to render the triumph as signal as possible, in the event of the hour's passing without the reappearance of the hunter, all the warriors and scouts of the party had been called in; and the whole band, men, women, and children, was now assembled at this single point, to be a witness of the expected scene. As the castle was in plain view, and by no means distant, it was easily watched by daylight; and it being thought that its inmates were now limited to Hurry, the Delaware, and the two girls, no apprehensions were felt of their being able to escape unseen. A large raft, having a breastwork of logs, had been prepared, and was in actual readiness to be used against either ark or castle, as occasion might require, as soon as the fate of Deerslayer was determined; the seniors of the party having come to the opinion that it was getting to be hazardous to delay their departure for Canada beyond the coming night. In short, the band waited merely to dispose of this single affair, ere it brought matters to a crisis, and prepared to commence its retreat towards the distant waters of Ontario.

It was an imposing scene into which Deerslayer now found himself advancing. All the older warriors were seated on the trunk of the fallen tree, waiting his approach with grave decorum. On the right stood the young men, armed, while the left was occupied by the women and children. In the center was an open space of considerable extent, always canopied by leaves, but from which the underbrush, dead wood, and other obstacles had been carefully removed. The more open area had probably been much used by former parties, for this was the place where the appearance of a sward was the most decided. The arches of the woods, even at high noon, cast their somber shadows on the spot, which the brilliant rays of the sun that struggled through the leaves contributed to mellow, and, if such an expression can be used, to illuminate. It was probably from a similar scene that the mind of man first got its idea of the effects of Gothic tracery and churchly hues;[2] this temple of nature producing some such effect, so far as light and shadows were concerned, as the well-known offspring of human invention.

As was not unusual among the tribes and wandering bands of the aborigines, two chiefs shared, in nearly equal degrees, the principal and primitive authority that was wielded over these children of the forest.

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[2] More recent investigation renders untenable this theory of the origin of Gothic architecture.

There were several who might claim the distinction of being chief men, but the two in question were so much superior to all the rest in influence, that when they agreed, no one disputed their mandates; and when they were divided, the band hesitated, like men who had lost their governing principle of action. It was also in conformity with practice—perhaps we might add, in conformity with nature—that one of the chiefs was indebted to his mind for his influence, whereas the other owed his distinction altogether to qualities that were physical. One was a senior well known for eloquence in debate, wisdom in council, and prudence in measures; while his great competitor, if not his rival, was a brave,—distinguished in war, notorious for ferocity, and remarkable, in the way of intellect, for nothing but the cunning and expedients of the warpath. The first was Rivenoak, who has already been introduced to the reader, while the last was called Le Panthère, in the language of the Canadas; or the Panther, to resort to the vernacular of the English colonies. The appellation of the fighting chief was supposed to indicate the qualities of the warrior, agreeably to a practice of the red man's nomenclature; ferocity, cunning, and treachery being, perhaps, the distinctive features of his character. The title had been received from the French, and was prized so much the more from that circumstance, the Indian submitting profoundly to the greater intelligence of his paleface allies in most things of this nature. How well the *sobriquet* was merited will be seen in the sequel.

Rivenoak and the Panther sat side by side, awaiting the approach of their prisoner, as Deerslayer put his moccasined foot on the strand; nor did either move or utter a syllable until the young man had advanced into the center of the area, and proclaimed his presence with his voice. This was done firmly, though in the simple manner that marked the character of the individual.

"Here I am, Mingos," he said, in the dialect of the Delawares, a language that most present understood; "here I am, and there is the sun. One is not more true to the laws of natur' than the other has proved true to his word. I am your prisoner; do with me what you please. My business with man and 'arth is settled; nothing remains now but to meet the white man's God; accordin' to a white man's duties and gifts."

A murmur of approbation escaped even the women at this address, and, for an instant, there was a strong and pretty general desire to adopt into the tribe one who owned so brave a spirit. Still there were dissenters from this wish, among the principal of whom might be classed the Panther, and his sister, Le Sumach, so called from the number of her children, who was the widow of Le Loup Cervier,[3] now known to have fallen by the hand of the captive. Native ferocity held one in subjection, while the corroding passion of revenge prevented the other from admitting any gentler feeling at the moment. Not so with Rivenoak. This chief arose, stretched his arm before him, in a gesture of courtesy, and paid his compliments with an ease and dignity that a prince might have envied. As, in that band, his wisdom and eloquence were confessedly without rivals, he knew that on himself would properly fall the duty of first replying to the speech of the paleface.

"Paleface, you are honest," said the Huron orator. "My people are happy in having captured a man, and not a skulking fox. We now know you; we shall treat you like a brave. If you have slain one of our warriors, and helped to kill others, you have a life of your own ready to give away in return. Some of my young men thought that the blood of a paleface was too thin; that it would refuse to run under the Huron knife. You will show them it is not so; your heart is stout as well as your body. It is a pleasure to make such a prisoner; should my warriors say that the death of Le Loup Cervier ought not to be forgotten, and that he cannot travel towards the land of spirits alone, that his enemy must be sent to overtake him, they will remember that he fell by the hand of a brave, and send you after him with such signs of our friendship as shall not make him ashamed to keep your company. I have spoken: you know what I have said."

"True enough, Mingo, all true as the gospel," returned the simple-minded hunter; "you *have* spoken, and I *do* know, not only what you have *said*, but, what is still more important, what you *mean*. I dare say your warrior, the Lynx, was a stout-hearted brave, and worthy of your fri'ndship and respect, but I do not feel unworthy to keep his company, without any passport from your hands. Nevertheless, here I am, ready to receive judgment from your council, if, indeed, the matter was not detarmined among you afore I got back."

"My old men would not sit in council over a paleface until they saw him among them," answered Rivenoak, looking around him a little ironically; "they said it would be like sitting in council over the winds; they go where they will, and come back as they see fit, and not otherwise. There was one voice that spoke in your favor, Deerslayer, but it was alone, like the song of the wren whose mate has been struck by the hawk."

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[3] Deerslayer had killed The Lynx or Le Loup Cervier, in a skirmish a few days before.

"I thank that voice, whosever it may have been, Mingo, and will say it was as true a voice as the rest were lying voices. A furlough is as binding on a paleface, if he be honest, as it is on a redskin; and was it not so, I would never bring disgrace on the Delawares, among whom I may be said to have received my edication. But words are useless, and lead to braggin' feelin's; here I am; act your will on me."

Rivenoak made a sign of acquiescence, and then a short conference was privately held among the chiefs. As soon as the latter ended, three or four young men fell back from among the armed group, and disappeared. Then it was signified to the prisoner that he was at liberty to go at large on the point, until a council was held concerning his fate. There was more of seeming than of real confidence, however, in this apparent liberality, inasmuch as the young men mentioned already formed a line of sentinels across the breadth of the point, inland, and escape from any other part was out of the question. Even the canoe was removed beyond this line of sentinels, to a spot where it was considered safe from any sudden attempt. These precautions did not proceed from a failure of confidence, but from the circumstance that the prisoner had now complied with all the required conditions of his parole, and it would have been considered a commendable and honorable exploit to escape from his foes. So nice, indeed, were the distinctions drawn by the savages, in cases of this nature, that they often gave their victims a chance to evade the torture, deeming it as creditable to the captors to overtake, or to outwit a fugitive, when his exertions were supposed to be quickened by the extreme jeopardy of his situation, as it was for him to get clear from so much extraordinary vigilance.

Nor was Deerslayer unconscious of, or forgetful of, his rights and his opportunities. Could he now have seen any probable opening for an escape, the attempt would not have been delayed a minute. But the case seemed desperate. He was aware of the line of sentinels, and felt the difficulty of breaking through it unharmed. The lake offered no advantages, as the canoe would have given his foes the greatest facilities for overtaking him; else would he have found it no difficult task to swim as far as the castle. As he walked about the point, he even examined the spot to ascertain if it offered no place of concealment; but its openness, its size, and the hundred watchful glances that were turned towards him, even while those who made them affected not to see him, prevented any such expedient from succeeding. The dread and disgrace of failure had no influence on Deerslayer, who deemed it ever a point of honor to reason and feel like a white man, rather than as an Indian, and who felt it a sort of duty to do all he could that did not involve a dereliction from principle, in order to save his life. Still he hesitated about making the effort, for he also felt that he ought to see the chance of success before he committed himself.

In the mean time the business of the camp appeared to proceed in its regular train. The chiefs consulted apart, admitting no one but the Sumach to their councils; for she, the widow of the fallen warrior, had an exclusive right to be heard on such an occasion. The young men strolled about in indolent listlessness, awaiting the result with Indian impatience, while the females prepared the feast that was to celebrate the termination of the affair, whether it proved fortunate or otherwise for our hero. No one betrayed feeling; and an indifferent observer, beyond the extreme watchfulness of the sentinels, would have detected no extraordinary movement or sensation to denote the real state of things. Two or three old women put their heads together, and it appeared unfavorably to the prospect of Deerslayer, by their scowling looks and angry gestures; but a group of Indian girls were evidently animated by a different impulse, as was apparent by stolen glances that expressed pity and regret. In this condition of the camp, an hour soon glided away.

Suspense is, perhaps, the feeling of all others, that is most difficult to be supported. When Deerslayer landed, he fully expected in the course of a few minutes to undergo the tortures of an Indian revenge, and he was prepared to meet his fate manfully; but the delay proved far more trying than the nearer approach of suffering, and the intended victim began seriously to meditate some desperate effort at escape, as it might be from sheer anxiety to terminate the scene, when he was suddenly summoned to appear, once more, in front of his judges, who had already arranged the band in its former order, in readiness to receive him.

"Killer of the Deer," commenced Rivenoak, as soon as his captive stood before him, "my aged men have listened to wise words; they are ready to speak. You are a man whose fathers came from beyond the rising sun; we are children of the setting sun; we turn our faces towards the Great Sweet Lakes when we look towards our villages. It may be a wise country and full of riches towards the morning, but it is very pleasant towards the evening. We love most to look in that direction. When we gaze at the east we feel afraid, canoe after canoe bringing more and more of your people in the track of the sun, as if their land was so full as to run over. The red men are few already; they have need of help. One of our best lodges has lately been emptied by the death of its master; it will be a long time before his son can grow big enough to sit in his place. There is his widow! she will want venison to feed her and her children, for her sons are yet like the young of the robin before they quit the nest. By your hand has this great calamity befallen her. She has two duties: one to Le Loup Cervier, and one to his children. Scalp for scalp, life for life, blood for blood, is one law; to feed her young another. We know you, Killer of the Deer. You are honest; when you say a thing it is so. You have but one tongue, and that is not forked like a snake's. Your head is never hid in the grass; all can see it. What you say that will you do. You are just. When you have done wrong, it is your wish to do right again as soon as you can. Here is the Sumach; she is alone in her wigwam, with children crying around her for food; yonder is a rifle, it is loaded and ready to be fired. Take the gun; go forth and shoot a deer; bring the venison and lay it before the widow of Le Loup Cervier; feed her children; call yourself her husband. After which your heart will no longer be Delaware, but Huron; Le Sumach's ears will not hear the cries of her children; my people will count the proper number of warriors."

"I feared this, Rivenoak," answered Deerslayer, when the other had ceased speaking; "yes, I did dread that it would come to this. Hows'ever, the truth is soon told, and that will put an end to all expectations on this head. Mingo, I'm white, and Christian-born; 'twould ill become me to take a wife, under redskin forms, from among heathen. That which I wouldn't do in peaceable times, and under a bright sun, still less would I do behind clouds, in order to save my life. I may never marry; most likely Providence, in putting me up here in the woods, has intended I should live single, and without a lodge of my own; but should such a thing come to pass, none but a woman of my own color and gifts shall darken the door of my wigwam. As for feeding the young of your dead warrior, I would do that cheerfully, could it be done without discredit; but it cannot, seeing that I can never live in a Huron village. Your own young men must find the Sumach in venison, and the next time she marries, let her take a husband whose legs are not long enough to overrun territory that don't belong to him. We fou't a fair battle, and he fell,—in this there is nothin' but what a brave expects, and should be ready to meet. As for getting a Mingo heart, as well might you expect to see gray hairs on a boy, or the blackberry growing on the pine. No, no, Huron; my gifts are white so far as wives are consarned; it is Delaware in all things touchin' Injins."

These words were scarcely out of the mouth of Deerslayer before a common murmur betrayed the dissatisfaction with which they had been heard. The aged women, in particular, were loud in their expressions of disgust; and the gentle Sumach herself, a woman quite old enough to be our hero's mother, was not the least pacific in her denunciations. But all the other manifestations of disappointment and discontent were thrown into the background by the fierce resentment of the Panther. This grim chief had thought it a degradation to permit his sister to become the wife of a paleface of the Yengeese,[4] at all, and had only given a reluctant consent to the arrangement—one by no means unusual among the Indians, however—at the earnest solicitations of the bereaved widow; and it goaded him to the quick to find his condescension slighted, the honor he with so much regret had been persuaded to accord, contemned. The animal from which he got his name does not glare on his intended prey with more frightful ferocity than his eyes gleamed on the captive; nor was his arm backward in seconding the fierce resentment that almost consumed his breast.

"Dog of the palefaces!" he exclaimed, in Iroquois, "go yell among the curs of your own evil hunting-grounds!"

The denunciation was accompanied by an appropriate action. Even while speaking, his arm was lifted and the tomahawk hurled. Luckily the loud tones of the speaker had drawn the eye of Deerslayer towards him, else would that moment have probably closed his career. So great was the dexterity with which this dangerous weapon was thrown, and so deadly the intent, that it would have riven the skull of the prisoner, had he not stretched forth an arm and caught the handle in one of its turns, with a readiness quite as remarkable as the skill with which the missile had been hurled. The projectile force was so great, notwithstanding, that when Deerslayer's arm was arrested, his hand was raised above and behind his own head, and in the very attitude necessary to return the attack. It is not certain whether the circumstance of finding himself unexpectedly in this menacing posture and armed, tempted the young man to retaliate, or whether sudden resentment overcame his forbearance and prudence. His eye kindled, however, and a small red spot appeared on each cheek, while he cast all his energy into the effort of his arm, and threw back the weapon at his assailant. The unexpectedness of this blow contributed to its success—the Panther neither raising an arm nor bending his head to avoid it. The keen little axe struck the victim in a perpendicular line with the nose, directly between the eyes, literally braining him on the spot. Sallying forward, as the serpent darts at its enemy even while receiving its own death-wound, this man of powerful frame fell his length into the open area formed by the circle, quivering in death. A common rush to his relief left the captive for a single instant, quite without the crowd; and, willing to make one desperate effort for his life, he bounded off with the activity of a deer. There was but a breathless instant, when the whole band, old and young, women and children, abandoning the lifeless body of the Panther where it lay, raised the yell of alarm, and followed in pursuit.

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[4] English, Yankees

Sudden as had been the event which induced Deerslayer to make this desperate trial of speed, his mind was not wholly unprepared for the fearful emergency. In the course of the past hour, he had pondered well on the chances of such an experiment, and had shrewdly calculated all the details of success and failure. At the first leap, therefore, his body was completely under the direction of an intelligence that turned all its efforts to the best account, and prevented everything like hesitation or indecision at the important instant of the start. To this alone was he indebted for the first great advantage, that of getting through the line of sentinels unharmed. The manner in which this was done, though sufficiently simple, merits a description.

Although the shores of the point were not fringed with bushes, as was the case with most of the others on the lake, it was owing altogether to the circumstance that the spot had been so much used by hunters and fishermen. This fringe commenced on what might be termed the mainland, and was as dense as usual, extending in long lines both north and south. In the latter direction, then, Deerslayer held his way; and, as the sentinels were a little without the commencement of this thicket before the alarm was clearly communicated to them, the fugitive had gained its cover. To run among the bushes, however, was out of the question, and Deerslayer held his way for some forty or fifty yards in the water, which was barely knee-deep, offering as great an obstacle to the speed of his pursuers as it did to his own. As soon as a favorable spot presented, he darted through the line of bushes, and issued into the open woods.

Several rifles were discharged at Deerslayer while in the water, and more followed as he came out into the comparative exposure of the clear forest. But the direction of his line of flight, which partially crossed that of the fire, the haste with which the weapons had been aimed, and the general confusion that prevailed in the camp, prevented any harm from being done. Bullets whistled past him, and many cut twigs from the branches at his side, but not one touched even his dress. The delay caused by these fruitless attempts was of great service to the fugitive, who had gained more than a hundred yards on even the leading men of the Hurons, ere something like concert and order had entered into the chase. To think of following with rifle in hand was out of the question; and, after emptying their pieces in vague hope of wounding their captive, the best runners of the Indians threw them aside, calling out to the women and boys to recover and load them again as soon as possible.

Deerslayer knew too well the desperate nature of the struggle in which he was engaged to lose one of the precious moments. He also knew that his only hope was to run in a straight line, for as soon as he began to turn or double the greater number of his pursuers would put escape out of the question. He held his way, therefore, in a diagonal direction, up the acclivity, which was neither very high nor very steep, in this part of the mountain, but which was sufficiently toilsome for one contending for life, to render it painfully oppressive. There, however, he slackened his speed to recover breath, proceeding even at a quick walk, or slow trot, along the more difficult parts of the way. The Hurons were whooping and leaping behind him; but this he disregarded, well knowing they must overcome the difficulties he had surmounted ere they could reach the elevation to which he had attained. The summit of the first hill was now quite near him, and he saw, by the formation of the land, that a deep glen intervened before the base of a second hill could be reached. Walking deliberately to the summit, he glanced eagerly about him in every direction, in quest of a cover. None offered in the ground; but a fallen tree lay near him, and desperate circumstances required desperate remedies. This tree lay in a line parallel to the glen at the brow of the hill; to leap on it, and then to force his person as close as possible under its lower side, took but a moment. Previously to disappearing from his pursuers, however, Deerslayer stood on the height and gave a cry of triumph, as if exulting at the sight of the descent that lay before him. In the next instant he was stretched beneath the tree.

No sooner was this expedient adopted, than the young man ascertained how desperate had been his own efforts, by the violence of the pulsation in his frame. He could hear his heart beat, and his breathing was like the action of a bellows in quick motion. Breath was gained, however, and the heart soon ceased to throb as if about to break through its confinement. The footsteps of those who toiled up the opposite side of the acclivity were now audible, and presently voices and treads announced the arrival of the pursuers. The foremost shouted as they reached the height; then, fearful that their enemy would escape under favor of the descent, each leaped upon the fallen tree, and plunged into the ravine, trusting to get a sight of the pursued, ere he reached the bottom. In this manner Huron followed Huron, until Natty began to hope the whole had passed. Others succeeded, however, until quite forty had leaped over the tree; and then he counted them, as the surest mode of ascertaining how many could be behind. Presently all were in the bottom of the glen, quite a hundred feet below him, and some had even ascended part of the opposite hill, when it became evident an inquiry was making as to the direction he had taken. This was the critical moment; and one of nerves less steady, or of a training that had been neglected, would have seized it to rise and fly. Not so with Deerslayer. He still lay quiet, watching with jealous vigilance every movement below, and fast regaining his breath.

The Hurons now resembled a pack of hounds at fault. Little was said, but each man ran about, examining the dead leaves, as the hound hunts for the lost scent. The great number of moccasins that had passed made the examination difficult, though the in-toe of an Indian was easily to be distinguished from the freer and wider step of a white man. Believing that no more pursuers remained behind, and hoping to steal away unseen, Deerslayer suddenly threw himself over the tree, and fell on the upper side. This achievement appeared to be effected successfully, and hope beat high in the bosom of the fugitive. Rising to his hands and feet, after a moment lost in listening to the sounds in the glen, in order to ascertain if he had been seen, the young man next scrambled to the top of the hill, a distance of only ten yards, in the expectation of getting its brow between him and his pursuers, and himself so far under cover. Even this was effected, and he rose to his feet, walking swiftly but steadily along the summit, in a direction opposite to that in which he had first fled. The nature of the calls in the glen, however, soon made him uneasy, and he sprang upon the summit again, in order to reconnoiter. No sooner did he reach the height, than he was seen, and the chase renewed. As it was better footing on the level ground, Deerslayer now avoided the side-hill, holding his flight along the ridge; while the Hurons, judging from the general formation of the land, saw that the ridge would soon melt into the hollow, and kept to the latter, as the easiest mode of heading the fugitive. A few at the same time turned south, with a view to prevent his escaping in that direction; while some crossed his trail towards the water, in order to prevent his retreat by the lake, running southerly.

The situation of Deerslayer was now more critical than it ever had been. He was virtually surrounded on three sides, having the lake on the fourth. But he had pondered well on all the chances, and took his measures with coolness, even while at the top of his speed. As is generally the case with the vigorous border-men, he could outrun any single Indian among his pursuers, who were principally formidable to him on account of their numbers, and the advantages they possessed in position; and he would not have hesitated to break off, in a straight line, at any spot, could he have got the whole band again fairly behind him. But no such chance did, or indeed could, now offer; and when he found that he was descending towards the glen, by the melting away of the ridge, he turned short, at right angles to his previous course, and went down the declivity with tremendous velocity, holding his way towards the shore. Some of his pursuers came panting up the hill, in direct chase, while most still kept on, in the ravine, intending to head him at its termination.

Deerslayer had now a different though a desperate project in view. Abandoning all thoughts of escape by the woods, he made the best of his way towards the canoe. He knew where it lay: could it be reached, he had only to run the gauntlet of a few rifles, and success would be certain. None of the warriors had kept their weapons, which would have retarded their speed, and the risk would come either from the uncertain hands of the women, or from those of some well-grown boy; though most of the latter were already out in hot pursuit. Everything seemed propitious to the execution of this plan, and the course being a continued descent, the young man went over the ground at a rate that promised a speedy termination to his toil.

As Deerslayer approached the point, several women and children were passed, but, though the former endeavored to cast dried branches between his legs, the terror inspired by his bold retaliation on the redoubted Panther was so great that none dared come near enough seriously to molest him. He went by all triumphantly, and reached the fringe of bushes. Plunging through these, our hero found himself once more in the lake and within fifty feet of the canoe. Here he ceased to run, for he well understood that his breath was now all-important to him. He even stooped, as he advanced, and cooled his parched mouth by scooping up water in his hand to drink. Still the moments pressed, and he soon stood at the side of the canoe. The first glance told him that the paddles had been removed! This was a sore disappointment after all his efforts, and, for a single moment, he thought of turning and of facing his foes by walking with dignity into the center of the camp again. But an infernal yell, such as the American savage alone can raise, proclaimed the quick approach of the nearest of his pursuers, and the instinct of life triumphed. Preparing himself duly, and giving a right direction to its bows, he ran off into the water bearing the canoe before him, threw all his strength and skill into a last effort, and cast himself forward so as to fall into the bottom of the light craft, without materially impeding its way. Here he remained on his back, both to regain his breath and to cover his person from the deadly rifle. The lightness, which was such an advantage in paddling the canoe, now operated unfavorably. The material was so like a feather that the boat had no momentum; else would the impulse in that smooth and placid sheet have impelled it to a distance from the shore, that would have rendered paddling with the hands safe. Could such a point once be reached, Deerslayer thought he might get far enough out to attract the attention of Chingachgook and Judith, who would not fail to come to his relief with other canoes,—a circumstance that promised everything. As the young man lay in the bottom of the canoe he watched its movements, by studying the tops of the trees on the mountain-side, and judged of his distance by the time and the motion. Voices on the shore were now numerous, and he heard something said about manning the raft, which fortunately for the fugitive lay at a considerable distance on the other side of the point.

Perhaps the situation of Deerslayer had not been more critical that day than it was at this moment. It certainly had not been one half as tantalizing. He lay perfectly quiet for two or three minutes, trusting to the single sense of hearing, confident that the noise on the lake would reach his ears, did any one venture to approach by swimming. Once or twice he fancied that the element was stirred by the cautious movement of an arm, and then he perceived it was the wash of the water on the pebbles of the strand; for, in mimicry of the ocean, it is seldom that those little lakes are so totally tranquil as not to possess a slight heaving and setting on their shores. Suddenly all the voices ceased, and a death-like stillness pervaded the spot, a quietness as profound as if all lay in the repose of inanimate life. By this time the canoe had drifted so far as to render nothing visible to Deerslayer, as he lay on his back, except the blue void of space, and a few of those brighter rays that proceed from the effulgence of the sun, marking his proximity. It was not possible to endure this uncertainty long. The young man well knew that the profound stillness foreboded evil, the savages never being so silent as when about to strike a blow—resembling the stealthy foot of the panther ere he takes his leap. He took out a knife, and was about to cut a hole through the bark in order to get a view of the shore, when he paused from a dread of being seen in the operation, which would direct the enemy where to aim their bullets. At this instant a rifle *was* fired, and the ball pierced both sides of the canoe, within eighteen inches of the spot where his head lay. This was close work, but our hero had too lately gone through that which was closer, to be appalled. He lay still half a minute longer, and then he saw the summit of an oak coming slowly within his narrow horizon.

Unable to account for this change, Deerslayer could restrain his impatience no longer. Hitching his body along with the utmost caution, he got his eye at the bullet-hole and fortunately commanded a very tolerable view of the point. The canoe, by one of those imperceptible impulses that so often decide the fate of men, as well as the course of things, had inclined southerly, and was slowly drifting down the lake. It was lucky that Deerslayer had given it a shove sufficiently vigorous to send it past the end of the point ere it took this inclination, or it must have gone ashore again. As it was, it drifted so near it as to bring the tops of two or three trees within the range of the young man's view, as has been mentioned, and, indeed, to come in quite as close proximity with the extremity of the point as was at all safe. The distance could not much have exceeded a hundred feet, though fortunately a light current of air from the southwest began to set it slowly off shore.

Deerslayer now felt the urgent necessity of resorting to some expedient to get farther from his foes, and if possible, to apprise his friends of his situation. The distance rendered the last difficult, while the proximity to the point rendered the first indispensable. As was usual in such craft, a large, round, smooth stone was in each end of the canoe, for the double purpose of seats and ballast; one of these was within reach of his feet. The stone he contrived to get so far between his legs as to reach it with his hands, and then he managed to roll it to the side of its fellow in the bows, where the two served to keep the trim of the light boat, while he worked his own body as far aft as possible. Before quitting the shore, and as soon as he perceived that the paddles were gone, Deerslayer had thrown a bit of dead branch into the canoe, and this was within reach of his arm. Removing the cap he wore, he put it on the end of this stick, and just let it appear over the edge of the canoe, as far as possible from his own person. This ruse was scarcely adopted before the young man had a proof how much he had underrated the intelligence of his enemies. In contempt of an artifice so shallow and commonplace, a bullet was fired directly through another part of the canoe, which actually grazed his skin. He dropped the cap and instantly raised it immediately over his head, as a safeguard. It would seem that this second artifice was unseen,—or what was more probable, the Hurons, feeling certain of recovering their captive, wished to take him alive.

Deerslayer lay passive a few minutes longer, his eye at the bullet-hole, however, and much did he rejoice at seeing that he was drifting gradually farther and farther from the shore. When he looked upwards the tree tops had disappeared, but he soon found that the canoe was slowly turning, so as to prevent his getting a view of anything at his peep-hole but of the two extremities of the lake. He now bethought him of the stick, which was crooked, and offered some facilities for rowing without the necessity of rising. The experiment succeeded, on trial, better even than he had hoped, though his great embarrassment was to keep the canoe straight. That his present maneuver was seen soon became apparent by the clamor on the shore, and a bullet, entering the stern of the canoe, traversed its length, whistling between the arms of our hero, and passed out at the head. This satisfied the fugitive that he was getting away with tolerable speed, and induced him to increase his efforts. He was making a stronger push than common, when another messenger from the point broke the stick out-board, and at once deprived him of his oar. As the sound of voices seemed to grow more and more distant, however, Deerslayer determined to leave all to the drift, until he believed himself beyond the reach of bullets. This was nervous work, but it was the wisest of all the expedients that offered; and the young man was encouraged to persevere in it by the circumstance that he felt his face fanned by the air, a proof that there was a little more wind.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Nor widows' tears, nor tender orphans' cries
  Can stop th' invaders' force;
Nor swelling seas, nor threatening skies,
  Prevent the pirate's course:
Their lives to selfish ends decreed,
Through blood and rapine they proceed;
No anxious thoughts of ill-repute

Suspend the impetuous and unjust pursuit;
But power and wealth obtained, guilty and great,
Their fellow-creatures' fears they raise, or urge
their hate.

CONGREVE.

By this time Deerslayer had been twenty minutes in the canoe, and he began to grow a little impatient for some signs of relief from his friends. The position of the boat still prevented his seeing in any direction, unless it were up or down the lake; and, though he knew that his line of sight must pass within a hundred yards of the castle, it, in fact, passed that distance to the westward of the buildings. The profound stillness troubled him also, for he knew not whether to ascribe it to the increasing space between him and the Indians, or to some new artifice. At length, wearied with fruitless watchfulness, the young man turned himself on his back, closed his eyes, and awaited the result in determined acquiescence. If the savages could so completely control their thirst for revenge, he was resolved to be as calm as themselves, and to trust his fate to the interposition of the currents and air.

Some additional ten minutes may have passed in this quiescent manner, on both sides, when Deerslayer thought he heard a slight noise, like a low rubbing against the bottom of his canoe. He opened his eyes of course, in expectation of seeing the face or arm of an Indian rising from the water, and found that a canopy of leaves was impending directly over his head. Starting to his feet, the first object that met his eye was Rivenoak, who had so far aided the slow progress of the boat as to draw it on the point, the grating on the strand being the sound that had first given our hero the alarm. The change in the drift of the canoe had been altogether owing to the baffling nature of the light currents of air, aided by some eddies in the water.

"Come," said the Huron, with a quiet gesture of authority to order his prisoner to land; "my young friend has sailed about till he is tired; he will forget how to run again, unless he uses his legs."[5]

. . . .

CHAPTER XXX

So deem'st thou—so each mortal deems
Of that which is from that which seems;
But other harvest here
Than that which peasant's scythe demands,
Was gathered in by sterner hands,
With bayonet, blade and spear.

SCOTT.

It exceeded Deerslayer's power to ascertain what had produced the sudden pause in the movements of his enemies, until the fact was revealed in the due course of events. He perceived that much agitation prevailed among the women in particular, while the warriors rested on their arms, in a sort of dignified expectation. It was plain no alarm was excited, though it was not equally apparent that a friendly occurrence produced the delay. Rivenoak was evidently apprised of all, and by a gesture of his arm he appeared to direct the circle to remain unbroken, and for each person to await the issue in the situation he or she then occupied. It required but a minute or two to bring an explanation of this singular and mysterious pause, which was soon terminated by the appearance of Judith, on the exterior of the line of bodies, and her ready admission within its circle.

If Deerslayer was startled by this unexpected arrival, well knowing that the quick-witted girl could claim none of that exemption from the penalties of captivity that was so cheerfully accorded to her feeble-minded sister, he was equally astonished at the guise in which she came. All her ordinary forest attire, neat and becoming as this usually was, had been laid aside for the brocade that has been already mentioned, and which had once before wrought so great and magical an effect in her appearance. Nor was this all. Accustomed to see the ladies of the garrison in the formal gala attire of the day, and familiar with the more critical niceties of these matters, the girl had managed to complete her dress in a way to leave nothing strikingly defective in its details, or even to betray an incongruity that would have been detected by one practiced in the mysteries of the toilet. Head, feet, arms, hands, bust, and drapery, were all in harmony, as female attire was then deemed attractive and harmonious; and the end she aimed at, that of imposing on the uninstructed senses of the savages, by causing them to believe their guest was a woman of rank and importance, might well have succeeded with those whose habits had taught them to discriminate between persons. Judith, in addition to her rare native beauty, had a singular grace of person, and her mother had imparted enough of her own deportment to prevent any striking or offensive vulgarity of manner; so that, sooth to say, the gorgeous dress might have been worse bestowed in nearly every particular. Had it been displayed in a capital, a thousand might have worn it before one could have been found to do more credit to its gay colors, glossy satins, and rich laces than the beautiful creature whose person it now aided to adorn.

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[5] In what is here omitted the Indians begin torturing Deerslayer, and Hetty comes to the Indian camp in a vain attempt to rescue him.

The effect of such an apparition had not been miscalculated. The instant Judith found herself within the circle, she was in a degree compensated for the fearful personal risk she ran, by the unequivocal sensation of surprise and admiration produced by her appearance. The grim old warriors uttered their favorite exclamation, "Hugh!" The younger men were still more sensibly overcome, and even the women were not backward in letting open manifestations of pleasure escape them. It was seldom that these untutored children of the forest had ever seen any white female above the commonest sort, and as to dress, never before had so much splendor shone before their eyes. The gayest uniforms of both French and English seemed dull compared with the luster of the brocade; and while the rare personal beauty of the wearer added to the effect produced by its hues, the attire did not fail to adorn that beauty in a way which surpassed even the hopes of its wearer. Deerslayer himself was astounded, and this quite as much by the brilliant picture the girl presented as at the indifference to consequences with which she had braved the danger of the step she had taken. Under such circumstances, all waited for the visitor to explain her object, which to most of the spectators seemed as inexplicable as her appearance.

"Which of these warriors is the principal chief?" demanded Judith of Deerslayer, as soon as she found it was expected that she should open the communication; "my errand is too important to be delivered to any of inferior rank. First explain to the Hurons what I say: then give an answer to the question I have put."

Deerslayer quietly complied, his auditors greedily listening to the interpretation of the first words that fell from so extraordinary a vision. The demand seemed perfectly in character for one who had every appearance of an exalted rank herself. Rivenoak gave an appropriate reply, by presenting himself before his fair visitor in a way to leave no doubt that he was entitled to all the consideration he claimed.

"I can believe this, Huron," resumed Judith, enacting her assumed part with a steadiness and dignity that did credit to her powers of imitation, for she strove to impart to her manner the condescending courtesy she had once observed in the wife of a general officer, at a similar, though a more amicable, scene—"I can believe you to be the principal person of this party; I see in your countenance the marks of thought and reflection. To you, then, I must make my communication."

"Let the Flower of the Woods speak," returned the old chief, courteously, as soon as her address had been translated, so that all might understand it. "If her words are as pleasant as her looks, they will never quit my ears; I shall hear them long after the winter in Canada has killed the flowers, and frozen all the speeches of summer."

This admiration was grateful to one constituted like Judith, and contributed to aid her self-possession quite as much as it fed her vanity. Smiling involuntarily, or in spite of her wish to seem reserved, she proceeded in her plot.

"Now, Huron," she continued, "listen to my words. Your eyes tell you that I am no common woman. I will not say I am queen of this country; *she* is afar off, in a distant land; but under our gracious monarchs there are many degrees of rank; one of these I fill. What that rank is precisely it is unnecessary for me to say, since you would not understand it. For that information you must trust your eyes. You *see* what I am; you must *feel* that in listening to my words you listen to one who can be your friend or your enemy, as you treat her."

This was well uttered, with a due attention to manner and a steadiness of tone that was really surprising, considering all the circumstances of the case. It was well though simply rendered into the Indian dialect, too, and it was received with a respect and gravity that augured favorably for the girl's success. But Indian thought is not easily traced to its sources. Judith waited with anxiety to hear the answer, filled with hope even while she doubted. Rivenoak was a ready speaker, and he answered as promptly as comported with the notions of Indian decorum; that peculiar people seeming to think a short delay respectful, inasmuch as it manifests that the words already heard have been duly weighed.

"My daughter is handsomer than the wild roses of Ontario; her voice is pleasant to the ear as the song of the wren," answered the cautious and wily chief, who of all the band stood alone in not being fully imposed on by the magnificent and unusual appearance of Judith, but who distrusted even while he wondered; "the humming-bird is not much larger than the bee; yet its feathers are as gay as the tail of the peacock. The Great Spirit sometimes puts very bright clothes on very little animals. Still, he covers the moose with coarse hair. These things are beyond the understanding of poor Indians, who can only comprehend what they see and hear. No doubt my daughter has a very large wigwam somewhere about the lake; the Hurons have not found it on account of their ignorance!"

"I have told you, chief, that it would be useless to state my rank and residence, inasmuch as you would not comprehend them. You must trust to your eyes for this knowledge; what red man is there that cannot see? This blanket that I wear is not the blanket of a common squaw; these ornaments are such as the wives and daughters of chiefs only appear in. Now listen and hear why I have come alone among your people, and hearken to the errand that has brought me here. The Yengeese have young men as well as the Hurons; and plenty of them, too; this you well know."

"The Yengeese are as plenty as the leaves on the trees! This every Huron knows and feels."

"I understand you, chief. Had I brought a party with me it might have caused trouble. My young men and your young men would have looked angrily at each other, especially had my young men seen that paleface bound for the tortures. He is a great hunter, and is much loved by all the garrisons, far and near. There would have been blows about him, and the trail of the Iroquois back to the Canadas would have been marked with blood."

"There is so much blood on it now," returned the chief, gloomily, "that it blinds our eyes. My young men see that it is all Huron."

"No doubt; and more Huron blood would be spilt, had I came surrounded with palefaces. I have heard of Rivenoak, and have thought it would be better to send him back in peace to his village, that he might leave his women and children behind him. If he then wished to come for our scalps, we would meet him. He loves animals made of ivory and little rifles. See; I have brought some with me to show him. I am his friend. When he has packed up these things among his goods, he will start for his village, before any of my young men can overtake him; and then he will show his people in Canada what riches they can come to seek, now that our great fathers, across the salt lake, have sent each other the war-hatchet. I will lead back with me this great hunter, of whom I have need to keep my house in venison."

Judith, who was sufficiently familiar with Indian phraseology, endeavored to express her ideas in the sententious manner common to those people; and she succeeded even beyond her own expectations. Deerslayer did her full justice in the translation, and this so much the more readily since the girl carefully abstained from uttering any direct untruth; a homage she paid to the young man's known aversion to falsehood, which he deemed a meanness altogether unworthy of a white man's gifts. The offering of the two remaining elephants, and of the pistols already mentioned, one of which was all the worse for the recent accident, produced a lively sensation among the Hurons generally, though Rivenoak received it coldly, notwithstanding the delight with which he had first discovered the probable existence of a creature with two tails. In a word, this cool and sagacious savage was not so easily imposed on as his followers; and with a sentiment of honor that half the civilized world would have deemed supererogatory, he declined the acceptance of a bribe that he felt no disposition to earn by a compliance with the donor's wishes.

"Let my daughter keep her two-tailed hog to eat when venison is scarce," he dryly answered; "and the little gun which has two muzzles. The Hurons will kill deer when they are hungry; and they have long rifles to fight with. This hunter cannot quit my young men now; they wish to know if he is as stout-hearted as he boasts himself to be."

"That I deny, Huron," interrupted Deerslayer, with warmth; "yes, that I downright deny as agin truth and reason. No man has heard me *boast* and no man shall, though ye flay me alive, and then roast the quivering flesh with your own infarnal devices and cruelties! I may be humble, and misfortunate, and your prisoner; but I'm no boaster, by my very gifts."

"My young paleface *boasts* he is *no* boaster," returned the crafty chief; "he *must* be right. I hear a strange bird singing. It has very rich feathers. No Huron ever before saw such feathers. They will be ashamed to go back to their village and tell their people that they let their prisoner go on account of the song of this strange bird, and not be able to give the *name* of the bird. They do not know how to say whether it is a wren or a cat-bird. This would be a great disgrace; my young men would not be allowed to travel in the woods without taking their mothers with them to tell them the names of the birds."

"You can ask my name of your prisoner," returned the girl. "It is Judith; and there is a great deal of the history of Judith in the palefaces' best book, the Bible. If I am a bird of fine feathers, I have also my name."

"No," answered the wily Huron, betraying the artifice he had so long practised by speaking in English with tolerable accuracy; "I not ask prisoner. He tired; he want rest. I ask my daughter with feeble mind. She speak truth. Come here, daughter; you answer. *Your* name Hetty?"

"Yes, that's what they call me," returned the girl; "though it's written Esther in the Bible."

"He write *him* in Bible, too? All write in Bible. No matter—what *her* name?"

"That's Judith, and it's so written in the Bible, though father sometimes called her Jude. That's my sister Judith, Thomas Hutter's daughter—Thomas Hutter, whom you called the Muskrat[6]; though he was *no* muskrat, but a man, like yourself—he lived in a house on the water, and that was enough for *you.*"

A smile of triumph gleamed on the hard-wrinkled countenance of the chief when he found how completely his appeal to the truth-loving Hetty had succeeded. As for Judith herself, the moment her sister was questioned, she saw that all was lost; for no sign, or even entreaty, could have induced the right-feeling girl to utter a falsehood. To attempt to impose a daughter of the Muskrat on the savages as a princess or a great lady she knew would be idle; and she saw her bold and ingenious expedient for liberating the captive fail through one of the simplest and most natural causes that could be imagined. She turned her eye on Deerslayer, therefore, as if imploring him to interfere to save them both.

"It will not do, Judith," said the young man, in answer to this appeal, which he understood, though he saw its uselessness; "it will not do. 'Twas a bold idee, and fit for a general's lady; but yonder Mingo"—Rivenoak had withdrawn to a little distance, and was out of ear-shot—"but yonder Mingo is an uncommon man, and not to be deceived by any unnat'ral sarcumventions. Things must come afore him in their right order to draw a cloud afore *his* eyes! 'Twas too much to attempt making him fancy that a queen or a great lady lived in these mountains; and no doubt he thinks the fine clothes you wear are some of the plunder of your own father—or, at least, of him who once passed for your father; as quite likely it was, if all they say is true!"

"At all events, Deerslayer, my presence here will save you for a time. They will hardly attempt torturing you before my face!"

"Why not, Judith? Do you think they will treat a woman of the palefaces more tenderly than they treat their own? It's true that your sex will most likely save you from the torments, but it will not save your liberty, and may not save your scalp. I wish you hadn't come, my good Judith; it can do no good to me, while it may do great harm to yourself."

"I can share your fate," the girl answered with generous enthusiasm. "They shall not injure you while I stand by, if in my power to prevent it; besides—"

"Besides what, Judith? What means have you to stop Injin cruelties, or to avart Injin deviltries?"

"None, perhaps, Deerslayer," answered the girl, with firmness; "but I can suffer with my friends—die with them if necessary."

"Ah! Judith—suffer you may; but die you will not until the Lord's time shall come. It's little likely that one of your sex and beauty will meet with a harder fate than to become the wife of a chief, if indeed your white inclinations can stoop to match with an Injin. 'Twould have been better had you stayed in the ark or the castle; but what has been done is done. You was about to say something, when you stopped at 'besides'?"

"It might not be safe to mention it here, Deerslayer," the girl hurriedly answered, moving past him carelessly, that she might speak in a low tone; "half an hour is all in all to us. None of your friends are idle."

The hunter replied merely by a grateful look. Then he turned toward his enemies, as if ready again to face the torments. A short consultation had passed among the elders of the band, and by this time they also were prepared with their decision. The merciful purpose of Rivenoak had been much weakened by the artifice of Judith, which, failing of its real object, was likely to produce results the very opposite of those she had anticipated. This was natural; the feeling being aided by the resentment of an Indian, who found how near he had been to becoming the dupe of an inexperienced girl. By this time Judith's real character was fully understood—the wide-spread reputation of her beauty contributed to the exposure. As for the unusual attire, it was confounded with the profound mystery of the animals with two tails, and, for the moment, lost its influence.

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[6] The name of the Indians for Hutter.

When Rivenoak, therefore, faced the captive again, it was with an altered countenance. He had abandoned the wish of saving him, and was no longer disposed to retard the more serious part of the torture. This change of sentiment was, in effect, communicated to the young men, who were already eagerly engaged in making their preparations for the contemplated scene. Fragments of dried wood were rapidly collected near the sapling, the splinters which it was intended to thrust into the flesh of the victim previously to lighting were all collected, and the thongs were already produced that were again to bind him to the tree. All this was done in profound silence, Judith watching every movement with breathless expectation, while Deerslayer himself stood seemingly as unmoved as one of the pines of the hills. When the warriors advanced to bind him, however, the young man glanced at Judith, as if to inquire whether resistance or submission were most advisable. By a significant gesture she counseled the last; and in a minute, he was once more fastened to the tree, a helpless object of any insult or wrong that might be offered. So eagerly did every one now act, that nothing was said. The fire was immediately lighted in the pile, and the end of all was anxiously expected.

It was not the intention of the Hurons absolutely to destroy the life of their victim by means of fire. They designed merely to put his physical fortitude to the severest proofs it could endure, short of that extremity. In the end, they fully intended to carry his scalp with them into their village, but it was their wish first to break down his resolution, and to reduce him to the level of a complaining sufferer. With this view, the pile of brush and branches had been placed at a proper distance, or one at which it was thought the heat would soon become intolerable, though it might not be immediately dangerous. As often happened, however, on these occasions, this distance had been miscalculated, and the flames began to wave their forked tongues in a proximity to the face of the victim that would have proved fatal, in another instant, had not Hetty rushed through the crowd, armed with a stick, and scattered the blazing pile in a dozen directions. More than one hand was raised to strike the presumptuous intruder to the earth; but the chiefs prevented the blows by reminding their irritated followers of the state of her mind. Hetty, herself, was insensible to the risk she ran; but, as soon as she had performed this bold act, she stood looking about her in frowning resentment, as if to rebuke the crowd of attentive savages for their cruelty.

"God bless you, dearest sister, for that brave and ready act!" murmured Judith, herself unnerved so much as to be incapable of exertion; "Heaven itself has sent you on its holy errand."

"'Twas well meant, Judith," rejoined the victim; "'twas excellently meant, and 'twas timely, though it may prove ontimely in the ind! What is to come to pass must come to pass soon, or 'twill quickly be too late. Had I drawn in one mouthful of that flame in breathing, the power of man couldn't save my life; and you see that this time they've so bound my forehead as not to leave my head the smallest chance. 'Twas well meant; but it might have been more marciful to let the flames act their part."

"Cruel, heartless Hurons!" exclaimed the still indignant Hetty; "would you burn a man and a Christian as you would burn a log of wood! Do you never read your Bibles? or do you think God will forget such things?"

A gesture from Rivenoak caused the scattered brands to be collected; fresh wood was brought, even the women and children busying themselves eagerly in the gathering of dried sticks. The flame was just kindling a second time, when an *Indian* female pushed through the circle, advanced to the heap, and with her foot dashed aside the lighted twigs in time to prevent the conflagration. A yell followed this second disappointment; but when the offender turned towards the circle, and presented the countenance of Hist, it was succeeded by a common exclamation of pleasure and surprise. For a minute, all thought of pursuing the business in hand was forgotten, and young and old crowded around the girl, in haste to demand an explanation of her sudden and unlooked-for return. It was at this critical instant that Hist spoke to Judith in a low voice, placed some small object, unseen, in her hand, and then turned to meet the salutations of the Huron girls, with whom she was personally a great favorite. Judith recovered her self-possession and acted promptly. The small, keen-edged knife, that Hist had given to the other, was passed by the latter into the hands of Hetty, as the safest and least-suspected medium of transferring it to Deerslayer. But the feeble intellect of the last defeated the well-grounded hopes of all three. Instead of first cutting loose the hands of the victim, and then concealing the knife in his clothes, in readiness for action at the most available instant, she went to work herself, with earnestness and simplicity, to cut the thongs that bound his head, that he might not again be in danger of inhaling flames. Of course this deliberate procedure was seen, and the hands of Hetty were arrested ere she had more than liberated the upper portion of the captive's body, not including his arms, below the elbows. This discovery at once pointed distrust towards Hist; and, to Judith's surprise, when questioned on the subject, that spirited girl was not disposed to deny her agency in what had passed.

"Why should I not help the Deerslayer?" the girl demanded, in the tones of a firm-minded woman. "He is the brother of a Delaware chief; my heart is all Delaware. Come forth, miserable Briarthorn, and wash the Iroquois paint from your face,—stand before the Hurons, the crow that you are; you would eat the carrion of your own dead rather than starve. Put him face to face with Deerslayer, chiefs and warriors; I will show you how great a knave you have been keeping in your tribe."

This bold language, uttered in their own dialect, and with a manner full of confidence, produced a deep sensation among the Hurons. Treachery is always liable to distrust; and though the recreant Briarthorn had endeavored to serve the enemy well, his exertions and assiduities had gained for him little more than toleration. His wish to obtain Hist for a wife had first induced him to betray her and his own people; but serious rivals to his first project had risen up among his new friends, weakening still more their sympathies with treason. In a word, Briarthorn had been barely permitted to remain in the Huron encampment, where he was as closely and as jealously watched as Hist herself; seldom appearing before the chiefs, and sedulously keeping out of view of Deerslayer, who, until this moment, was ignorant even of his presence. Thus summoned, however, it was impossible to remain in the background. "Wash the Iroquois paint from his face" he did not; for when he stood in the center of the circle, he was so disguised in these new colors, that at first the hunter did not recognize him. He assumed an air of defiance, notwithstanding, and haughtily demanded what any could say against "Briarthorn."

"Ask yourself that," continued Hist, with spirit, though her manner grew less concentrated, and there was a slight air of abstraction that became observable to Deerslayer and Judith, if to no others. "Ask that of your own heart, sneaking woodchuck of the Delawares; come not here with the face of an innocent man. Go look in the spring; see the colors of your enemies on your lying skin,—and then come back and boast how you ran from your tribe, and took the blanket of the French for your covering. Paint yourself as bright as a humming-bird, you will still be as black as the crow."

Hist had been so uniformly gentle while living with the Hurons, that they now listened to her language with surprise. As for the delinquent, his blood boiled in his veins; and it was well for the pretty speaker that it was not in his power to execute the revenge he burned to inflict on her, in spite of his pretended love.

"Who wishes Briarthorn?" he sternly asked. "If this paleface is tired of life; if afraid of Indian torments, speak, Rivenoak; I will send him after the warriors we have lost."

"No, chief,—no, Rivenoak," eagerly interrupted Hist. "The Deerslayer fears nothing; least of all a crow! Unbind him—cut his withes—place him face to face with this cawing bird; then let us see which is tired of life."

Hist made a forward movement, as if to take a knife from a young man, and perform the office she had mentioned in person; but an aged warrior interposed, at a sign from Rivenoak. This chief watched all the girl did with distrust; for, even while speaking in her most boastful language and in the steadiest manner, there was an air of uncertainty and expectation about her that could not escape so close an observer. She acted well; but two or three of the old men were equally satisfied that it was merely acting. Her proposal to release Deerslayer, therefore, was rejected; and the disappointed Hist found herself driven back from the sapling at the very moment she fancied herself about to be successful. At the same time the circle, which had got to be crowded and confused, was enlarged, and brought once more into order. Rivenoak now announced the intention of the old men again to proceed; the delay having been continued long enough, and leading to no result.

"Stop, Huron; stay, chiefs!" exclaimed Judith, scarcely knowing what she said, or why she interposed, unless to obtain time; "for God's sake, a single minute longer—"

The words were cut short by another and still more extraordinary interruption. A young Indian came bounding through the Huron ranks, leaping into the very center of the circle, in a way to denote the utmost confidence, or a temerity bordering on foolhardiness. Five or six sentinels were still watching the lake at different and distant points; and it was the first impression of Rivenoak that one of these had come in with tidings of import. Still, the movements of the stranger were so rapid, and his wardress, which scarcely left him more drapery than an antique statue, had so little distinguishing about it, that, at the first moment, it was impossible to ascertain whether he were friend or foe. Three leaps carried this warrior to the side of Deerslayer, whose withes were cut in the twinkling of an eye with a quickness and precision that left the prisoner perfect master of his limbs. Not till this was effected did the stranger bestow a glance on any other object; then he turned and showed the astonished Hurons the noble brow, fine person, and eagle eye of a young warrior, in the paint and panoply of a Delaware. He held a rifle in each hand, the butts of both resting on the earth, while from one dangled its proper pouch and horn. This was Killdeer, which even as he looked boldly and in defiance on the crowd around him, he suffered to fall back into the hands of its proper owner. The presence of two armed men, though it was in their midst, startled the Hurons. Their rifles were scattered about against the different trees, and their only weapons were their knives and tomahawks. Still, they had too much self-possession to betray fear. It was little likely that so small a force would assail so strong a band; and each man expected some extraordinary proposition to succeed so decisive a step. The stranger did not seem disposed to disappoint them; he prepared to speak.

"Hurons," he said, "this earth is very big. The great lakes are big, too; there is room beyond them for the Iroquois, there is room for the Delawares on this side. I am Chingachgook, the son of Uncas, the kinsman of Tamenund. This is my betrothed; that paleface is my friend. My heart was heavy when I missed him. All the Delaware girls are waiting for Wah; they wonder that she stays away so long. Come, let us say farewell, and go on our path."

"Hurons, this is your mortal enemy, the Great Serpent of them you hate!" cried Briarthorn. "If he escape, blood will be in your moccasin-prints from this spot to the Canadas. *I* am *all* Huron."

As the last words were uttered, the traitor cast his knife at the naked breast of the Delaware. A quick movement of the arm on the part of Hist, who stood near, turned aside the blow, the dangerous weapon burying its point in a pine. At the next instant a similar weapon glanced from the hand of the Serpent, and quivered in the recreant's heart. A minute had scarcely elapsed from the moment in which Chingachgook bounded into the circle, and that in which Briarthorn fell, like a dog, dead in his tracks. The rapidity of events prevented the Hurons from acting; but this catastrophe permitted no further delay. A common exclamation followed, and the whole party was in motion. At this instant a sound unusual to the woods was heard, and every Huron, male and female, paused to listen, with ears erect, and faces filled with expectation. The sound was regular and heavy, as if the earth were struck with beetles. Objects became visible among the trees of the background, and a body of troops was seen advancing with measured tread. They came upon the charge, the scarlet of the king's livery shining among the bright green foliage of the forest.

The scene that followed is not easily described. It was one in which wild confusion, despair, and frenzied efforts were so blended as to destroy the unity and distinctness of the action. A general yell burst from the enclosed Hurons; it was succeeded by the hearty cheers of England. Still not a musket or rifle was fired, though that steady, measured tramp continued, and the bayonet was seen gleaming in advance of a line that counted nearly sixty men. The Hurons were taken at a fearful disadvantage. On three sides was the water, while their formidable and trained foes cut them off from flight on the fourth. Each warrior rushed for his arms, and then all on the point, man, woman, and child, eagerly sought the covers. In this scene of confusion and dismay, however, nothing could surpass the discretion and coolness of Deerslayer. His first care was to place Judith and Hist behind trees, and he looked for Hetty; but she had been hurried away in the crowd of Huron women. This effected, he threw himself on a flank of the retiring Hurons, who were inclining off towards the southern margin of the point, in the hope of escaping through the water. Deerslayer watched his opportunity, and finding two of his recent tormentors in a range, his rifle first broke the silence of the terrific scene. The bullet brought down both at one discharge. This drew a general fire from the Hurons, and the rifle and war cry of the Serpent were heard in the clamor. Still the trained men returned no answering volley, the whoop and piece of Hurry alone being heard on their side, if we except the short, prompt word of authority, and that heavy, measured, and menacing tread. Presently, however, the shrieks, groans, and denunciations that usually accompany the use of the bayonet followed. That terrible and deadly weapon was glutted in vengeance. The scene that succeeded was one of those of which so many have occurred in our own times, in which neither age nor sex forms an exemption to the lot of a savage warfare.

. . . . 1841

From THE PRAIRIE[1]

Chapter XXXIV

. . . .

The trapper was placed on a rude seat, which had been made, with studied care, to support his frame in an upright and easy attitude. The first glance of the eye told his former friends that the old man was at length called upon to pay the last tribute of nature. His eye was glazed, and apparently as devoid of sight as of expression. His features were a little more sunken and strongly marked than formerly; but there all change, so far as exterior was concerned, might be said to have ceased. His approaching end was not to be ascribed to any positive disease, but had been a gradual and mild decay of the physical powers. Life, it is true, still lingered in his system; but it was as if at times entirely ready to depart, and then it would appear to reanimate the sinking form, reluctant to give up the possession of a tenement that had never been corrupted by vice or undermined by disease. It would have been no violent fancy to have imagined that the spirit fluttered about the placid lips of the old woodsman, reluctant to depart from a shell that had so long given it an honest and honorable shelter.

His body was placed so as to let the light of the setting sun fall full upon the solemn features. His head was bare, the long, thin locks of gray fluttering lightly in the evening breeze. His rifle lay upon his knee, and the other accouterments of the chase were placed at his side, within reach of his hand. Between his feet lay the figure of a hound, with its head crouching to the earth, as if it slumbered; and so perfectly easy and natural was its position that a second glance was necessary to tell Middleton he saw only the skin of Hector, stuffed, by Indian tenderness and ingenuity, in a manner to represent the living animal. His own dog was playing at a distance with the child of Tachechana and Mahtoree. The mother herself stood at hand, holding in her arms a second offspring, that might boast of a parentage no less honorable than that which belonged to the son of Hard-Heart. Le Balafré was seated nigh the dying trapper, with every mark about his person that the hour of his own departure was not far distant. The rest of those immediately in the center were aged men, who had apparently drawn near in order to observe the manner in which a just and fearless warrior would depart on the greatest of his journeys.

The old man was reaping the rewards of a life remarkable for temperance and activity, in a tranquil and placid death. His vigor in a manner endured to the very last. Decay, when it did occur, was rapid, but free from pain. He had hunted with the tribe in the spring, and even throughout most of the summer, when his limbs suddenly refused to perform their customary offices. A sympathizing weakness took possession of all his faculties; and the Pawnees believed that they were going to lose, in this unexpected manner, a sage and counselor whom they had begun both to love and respect. But, as we have already said, the immortal occupant seemed unwilling to desert its tenement. The lamp of life flickered, without becoming extinguished. On the morning of the day on which Middleton arrived, there was a general reviving of the powers of the whole man. His tongue was again heard in wholesome maxims, and his eye from time to time recognized the persons of his friends. It merely proved to be a brief and final intercourse with the world on the part of one who had already been considered, as to mental communion, to have taken his leave of it forever.

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[1] In *The Prairie* we find Natty Bumppo, driven from the borders of the eastern states by the tide of civilization, spending his last days as a trapper west of the Mississippi among the Pawnees. Suddenly the old man's physical strength fails him, and his Indian friends, who have held him in great veneration because of his wise counsel and his perfect integrity, perceiving that his spirit is about to pass, gather solemnly at his side. Just at this hour Middleton, an officer of the United States army whom the old man had greatly befriended and who is a descendant of one of the early patrons of the hunter, comes to the Pawnee village to visit his aged friend. The scene described is what opens before him as he enters the Indian camp. Of the Indian characters, Le Balafré is an aged chief; Hard-Heart, the friend and filial support of the old trapper, is war-chief of the tribe; and Tachechana, the former wife of Mahtoree, a Sioux chief whom Hard-Heart killed in combat, is now the wife of Hard-Heart.

In this scene Cooper puts the final touches upon a character wholly his own creation, one full of impossibilities when viewed realistically, yet painted with such brilliance, and such a sense for inherent truth, as to stand after many literary generations as the type of the virtues of his class.

When he had placed his guests in front of the dying man, Hard-Heart, after a pause that proceeded as much from sorrow as decorum, leaned a little forward, and demanded:

"Does my father hear the words of his son?"

"Speak," returned the trapper, in tones that issued from his chest, but which were rendered awfully distinct by the stillness that reigned in the place. "I am about to depart from the village of the Loups, and shortly shall be beyond the reach of your voice."

"Let the wise chief have no cares for his journey," continued Hard-Heart, with an earnest solicitude that led him to forget, for the moment, that others were waiting to address his adopted parent; "a hundred Loups shall clear his path from briers."

"Pawnee, I die, as I have lived, a Christian man!" resumed the trapper, with a force of voice that had the same startling effect on his hearers as is produced by the trumpet, when its blast rises suddenly and freely on the air after its obstructed sounds have been heard struggling in the distance; "as I came into life so will I leave it. Horses and arms are not needed to stand in the presence of the Great Spirit of my people. He knows my color, and according to my gifts will he judge my deeds."

"My father will tell my young men how many Mingos[2] he has struck, and what acts of valor and justice he has done, that they may know how to imitate him."

"A boastful tongue is not heard in the heaven of a white man!" solemnly returned the old man. "What I have done, He has seen. His eyes are always open. That which has been well done will He remember; wherein I have been wrong will He not forget to chastise, though He will do the same in mercy. No, my son; a paleface may not sing his own praises, and hope to have them acceptable before his God!"

A little disappointed, the young partisan stepped modestly back, making way for the recent comers to approach. Middleton took one of the meager hands of the trapper, and struggling to command his voice, he succeeded in announcing his presence.

The old man listened like one whose thoughts were dwelling on a very different subject; but when the other had succeeded in making him understand that he was present, an expression of joyful recognition passed over his faded features.

"I hope you have not so soon forgotten those whom you so materially served!" Middleton concluded. "It would pain me to think my hold on your memory was so light."

"Little that I have ever seen is forgotten," returned the trapper. "I am at the close of many weary days, but there is not one among them all that I could wish to overlook. I remember you, with the whole of your company; aye, and your gran'ther that went before you. I am glad that you have come back upon these plains, for I had need of one who speaks the English, since little faith can be put in the traders[3] of these regions. Will you do a favor to an old and dying man?"

"Name it," said Middleton; "it shall be done."

"It is a far journey to send such trifles," resumed the old man, who spoke at short intervals, as strength and breath permitted; "a far and weary journey is the same; but kindnesses and friendships are things not to be forgotten. There is a settlement among the Otsego hills"—[4]

"I know the place," interrupted Middleton, observing that he spoke with increasing difficulty; "proceed to tell me what you would have done."

"Take this rifle, and pouch, and horn, and send them to the person whose name is graven on the plates of the stock,—a trader cut the letters with his knife,—for it is long that I have intended to send him such a token of my love!"

"It shall be so. Is there more that you could wish?"

"Little else have I to bestow. My traps I give to my Indian son;[5] for honestly and kindly has he kept his faith. Let him stand before me."

Middleton explained to the chief what the trapper had said, and relinquished his own place to the other.

"Pawnee," continued the old man, always changing his language to suit the person he addressed, and not infrequently according to the ideas he expressed, "it is a custom of my people for the father to leave his blessing with the son before he shuts his eyes forever. This blessing I give to you; take it; for the prayers of a Christian man will never make the path of a just warrior to the blessed prairies either longer or more tangled. May the God of a white man look on your deeds with friendly eyes, and may you never commit an act that shall cause him to darken his face. I know not whether we shall ever meet again. There are many traditions concerning the place of Good Spirits. It is not for one like me, old and experienced though I am, to set up my opinion against a nation's. You believe in the blessed prairies, and I have faith in the sayings of my fathers. If both are true, our parting will be final; but if it should prove that the same meaning is hid under different words, we shall yet stand together, Pawnee, before the face of your Wahcondah,[6] who will then be no other than my God. There is much to be said in favor of both religions, for each seems suited to its own people, and no doubt it was so intended. I fear I have not altogether followed the gifts of my color, inasmuch as I find it a little painful to give up forever the use of the rifle and the comforts of the chase. But then the fault has been my own, seeing that it could not have been His. Aye, Hector," he continued, leaning forward a little, and feeling for the ears of the hound, "our parting has come at last, dog, and it will be a long hunt. You have been an honest, and a bold, and a faithful hound. Pawnee, you cannot slay the pup on my grave, for where a Christian dog falls there he lies forever; but you can be kind to him after I am gone, for the love you bear his master."

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[2] Iroquois. See note introducing the selection from *The Deerslayer*, p. 257

[3] The traders of the West were mostly French Canadians.

[4] The next few lines refer to the old man's youth among the forests of central New York and to the persons who had befriended him there.

[5] Hard-Heart, his son by adoption.

"The words of my father are in my ears," returned the young partisan, making a grave and respectful gesture of assent.

"Do you hear what the chief has promised, dog?" demanded the trapper, making an effort to attract the notice of the insensible effigy of his hound. Receiving no answering look, nor hearing any friendly whine, the old man felt for the mouth, and endeavored to force his hand between the cold lips. The truth then flashed upon him, although he was far from perceiving the whole extent of the deception. Falling back in his seat, he hung his head, like one who felt a severe and unexpected shock. Profiting by this momentary forgetfulness, two young Indians removed the skin with the same delicacy of feeling that had induced them to attempt the pious fraud.

"The dog is dead!" muttered the trapper, after a pause of many minutes; "a hound has his time as well as a man; and well has he filled his days! Captain," he added, making an effort to wave his hand for Middleton, "I am glad you have come; for though kind, and well-meaning according to the gifts of their color, these Indians are not the men to lay the head of a white man in his grave. I have been thinking, too, of this dog at my feet; it will not do to set forth the opinion that a Christian can expect to meet his hound again; still there can be little harm in placing what is left of so faithful a servant nigh the bones of his master."

"It shall be as you desire."

"I'm glad you think with me in this matter. In order, then, to save labor, lay the pup at my feet; or for that matter, put him side by side. A hunter need never be ashamed to be found in company with his dog!"

"I charge myself with your wish."

The old man made a long and apparently a musing pause. At times he raised his eyes wistfully, as if he would again address Middleton, but some innate feeling appeared always to suppress his words. The other, who observed his hesitation, inquired in a way most likely to encourage him to proceed, whether there was aught else that he could wish to have done.

"I am without kith or kin in the wide world!" the trapper answered; "when I am gone there will be an end of my race. We have never been chiefs; but honest, and useful in our way, I hope it cannot be denied we have always proved ourselves. My father lies buried near the sea, and the bones of his son will whiten on the prairies"—

"Name the spot, and your remains shall be placed by the side of your father," interrupted Middleton.

"Not so, not so, captain. Let me sleep where I have lived,—beyond the din of the settlements! Still I see no need why the grave of an honest man should be hid, like a redskin in his ambushment. I paid a man in the settlements to make and put a graven stone at the head of my father's resting-place. It was of the value of twelve beaver-skins, and cunningly and curiously was it carved! Then it told to all comers that the body of such a Christian lay beneath; and it spoke of his manner of life, of his years, and of his honesty. When we had done with the Frenchers in the old war[7] I made a jour-

[6] The Great Spirit.

[7] The French and Indian War.

ney to the spot, in order to see that all was rightly performed, and glad I am to say, the workman had not forgotten his faith."

"And such a stone you would have at your grave?"

"I! no, no; I have no son but Hard-Heart, and it is little that an Indian knows of white fashions and usages. Besides, I am his debtor already, seeing it is so little I have done since I have lived in his tribe. The rifle might bring the value of such a thing—but then I know it will give the boy pleasure to hang the piece in his hall, for many is the deer and the bird that he has seen it destroy. No, no, the gun must be sent to him whose name is graven on the lock!"

"But there is one who would gladly prove his affection in the way you wish,—he who owes you not only his own deliverance from so many dangers, but who inherits a heavy debt of gratitude from his ancestors. The stone shall be put at the head of your grave."

The old man extended his emaciated hand, and gave the other a squeeze of thanks.

"I thought you might be willing to do it, but I was backward in asking the favor," he said, "seeing that you are not of my kin. Put no boastful words on the same, but just the name, the age, and the time of death, with something from the Holy Book; no more, no more. My name will then not be altogether lost on 'arth; I need no more."

Middleton intimated his assent, and then followed a pause that was only broken by distant and broken sentences from the dying man. He appeared now to have closed his accounts with the world, and to await merely for the final summons to quit it. Middleton and Hard-Heart placed themselves on the opposite sides of his seat, and watched with melancholy solicitude the variations of his countenance. For two hours there was no very sensible alteration. The expression of his faded and time-worn features was that of a calm and dignified repose. From time to time he spoke, uttering some brief sentence in the way of advice, or asking some simple questions concerning those in whose fortunes he still took a friendly interest. During the whole of that solemn and anxious period each individual of the tribe kept his place, in the most self-restrained patience. When the old man spoke, all bent their heads to listen; and when his words were uttered, they seemed to ponder on their wisdom and usefulness.

As the flame drew nigher to the socket his voice was hushed, and there were moments when his attendants doubted whether he still belonged to the living. Middleton, who watched each wavering expression of his weather-beaten visage with the interest of a keen observer of human nature, softened by the tenderness of personal regard, fancied he could read the workings of the old man's soul in the strong lineaments of his countenance. Perhaps what the enlightened soldier took for the delusion of mistaken opinion did actually occur—for who has returned from that unknown world to explain by what forms, and in what manner, he was introduced into its awful precincts? Without pretending to explain what must ever be a mystery to the quick, we shall simply relate facts as they occurred.

The trapper had remained nearly motionless for an hour. His eyes alone had occasionally opened and shut. When opened, his gaze seemed fastened on the clouds which hung around the western horizon, reflecting the bright colors, and giving form and loveliness to the glorious tints of an American sunset. The hour—the calm beauty of the season—the occasion, all conspired to fill the spectators with solemn awe. Suddenly, while musing on the remarkable position in which he was placed, Middleton felt the hand which he held grasp his own with incredible power, and the old man, supported on either side by his friends, rose upright to his feet. For a moment he looked about him, as if to invite all in presence to listen (the lingering remnant of human frailty), and then, with a fine military elevation of the head, and with a voice that might be heard in every part of that numerous assembly, he pronounced the word—

"Here!"[8]

A movement so entirely unexpected, and the air of grandeur and humility which were so remarkably united in the mien of the trapper, together with the clear and uncommon force of his utterance, produced a short period of confusion in the faculties of all present. When Middleton and Hard-Heart, each of whom had involuntarily extended a hand to support the form of the old man, turned to him again, they found that the subject of their interest was removed forever beyond the necessity of their care. They mournfully placed the body in its seat, and Le Balafré arose to announce the termination of the scene to the tribe. The voice of the old Indian seemed a sort of echo from that invisible world to which the meek spirit of the trapper had just departed.

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[8] It is worthy of note that this passage was written some thirty years before Thackeray conceived a somewhat similar final scene in the life of the beloved Colonel Newcome, the aged pensioner at the school he had attended as a boy: "At the usual evening hour, the chapel bell began to toll, and Thomas Newcome's hands outside the bed feebly beat time. And just as the last bell struck, a peculiar sweet smile shone over his face, and he lifted up his head a little, and quickly said, 'Adsum!' and fell back. It was the word we used at school, when our names were called; and lo, he whose heart was as that of a little child, had answered to his name, and stood in the presence of The Master." *The Newcomes*. vol. ii.

"A valiant, a just, and a wise warrior has gone on the path which will lead him to the blessed grounds of his people!" he said. "When the voice of the Wahcondah called him, he was ready to answer. Go, my children; remember the just chief of the pale-faces, and clear your own tracks from briers!"

The grave was made beneath the shade of some noble oaks. It has been carefully watched to the present hour by the Pawnees of the Loup, and is often shown to the traveler and the trader as a spot where a just white man sleeps. In due time the stone was placed at its head, with the simple inscription which the trapper had himself requested. The only liberty taken by Middleton was to add, "May no wanton hand ever disturb his remains!"

1827

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

Born, Cummington, Massachusetts, 1794, died, New York City, 1878. The son of a poor but able country doctor, Bryant, after meager preparation, was sent to Williams College, where he remained seven months, then gave up hope of a college training and studied law. After a few years' practice, during which his poetry was beginning to attract attention, he entered journalism in New York City, and from 1828 was editor-in-chief of the *Evening Post*. He traveled extensively abroad. Aside from frequent volumes of poems from 1821 to 1863, he wrote *Letters of a Traveller,* 1852; *Letters from Spain,* 1859; *Letters from the East,* 1869; *Translation of the Iliad,* 1870; *Translation of the Odyssey,* 1871-1872.

THANATOPSIS[1]

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language; for his gayer hours
She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
And eloquence of beauty, and she glides
Into his darker musings, with a mild
And healing sympathy, that steals away
Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts
Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
Over thy spirit, and sad images
Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
Make thee to shudder and grow sick at heart;—
Go forth, under the open sky, and list
To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
Comes a still voice—
                    Yet a few days, and thee
The all-beholding sun shall see no more
In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground,
Where thy pale form was laid with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mold.

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[1] American literature of the nineteenth century was fortunate in the fact that it had at the outset of its approach to maturity, in the work of Bryant and Irving, standards of form in poetry and prose. Bryant's work is enveloped in a "cold, thin atmosphere," lacks passion and spontaneity, and personal charm; yet has high value because of its elemental dignity, its correctness, its sobriety, and the fact that it transmuted into art some spiritual forces of the America of a hundred years ago. The word thanatopsis is made up of two Greek words, Θάνατος, death, and ὄψις, view, hence a view of death. Bryant wrote most of the poem ("Yet a few days" to "bed with thee") when he was seventeen or eighteen years old, and then placed the verses in a pigeon-hole of his father's desk, where they remained, apparently untouched, for several years. When at last Richard Henry Dana, one of the editors of the *North American Review,* read the lines in 1817 he could at first not believe that the author was an American, and agreed finally to publish them only on the supposition that they had been written by Bryant's father, then a senator in the Massachusetts legislature. See Parke Godwin's *Life of Bryant,* i. 150. The poem was completed in 1821.

Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulcher. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun,—the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between;
The venerable woods—rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,
Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—[2]
Are but the solemn decorations all
Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death
Through the still lapse of ages.[2] All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan[3] wilderness,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings—yet the dead are there;
And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw
In silence from the living, and no friend
Take note of thy departure? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave
Their mirth and their employments, and shall come
And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glides away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
The speechless babe, and the gray-headed man—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.[4]

1811 1817

TO A WATERFOWL[1]

Whither, midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly seen against the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean-side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast—
The desert and illimitable air—
Lone wandering, but not lost.

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[2] Bryant is particularly happy in such phrasings as these, which would be notable in the work of even a much greater poet. It is in these that his greatest merit lies, for while the literary vistas opened by his work are meager, his eye for nature is correct and inspires him often to the faultless stroke.

[3] The Barcan desert is northwest of Egypt.

[4] One characteristic of American literature is its tone of high, if cold, morality.

[1] Bryant wrote the poem at a time of peculiar anxiety when away from home, seeking a place where he might find work in his profession. The picture is what he saw as he walked over the Massachusetts hills at sunset.

All day thy wings have fanned,
At that far height, the cold, thin atmosphere,
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end;
Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest,
And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend,
Soon, o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He who, from zone to zone,
Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight,
In the long way that I must tread alone
Will lead my steps aright.

1815 1818

GREEN RIVER

When breezes are soft and skies are fair,
I steal an hour from study and care,
And hie me away to the woodland scene,
Where wanders the stream with waters of green,
As if the bright fringe of herbs on its brink
Had given their stain to the wave they drink;
And they, whose meadows it murmurs through,
Have named the stream from its own fair hue.

Yet pure its waters—its shallows are bright
With colored pebbles and sparkles of light,
And clear the depths where its eddies play,
And dimples deepen and whirl away,
And the plane-tree's speckled arms o'ershoot
The swifter current that mines its root,
Through whose shifting leaves, as you walk the hill,
The quivering glimmer of sun and rill
With a sudden flash on the eye is thrown,
Like the ray that streams from the diamond-stone.
Oh, loveliest there the spring days come,
With blossoms, and birds, and wild-bees' hum;
The flowers of summer are fairest there,
And freshest the breath of the summer air;
And sweetest the golden autumn day
In silence and sunshine glides away.

Yet, fair as thou art, thou shunnest to glide,
Beautiful stream! by the village side;
But windest away from haunts of men,
To quiet valley and shaded glen;
And forest, and meadow, and slope of hill,
Around thee, are lonely, lovely, and still,
Lonely—save when, by thy rippling tides,
From thicket to thicket the angler glides;
Or the simpler[1] comes, with basket and book,
For herbs of power on thy banks to look;
Or haply, some idle dreamer, like me,
To wander, and muse, and gaze on thee,
Still—save the chirp of birds that feed
On the river cherry and seedy reed,
And thy own wild music gushing out
With mellow murmur and fairy shout,
From dawn to the blush of another day,
Like traveler singing along his way.

That fairy music I never hear,
Nor gaze on those waters so green and clear,
And mark them winding away from sight,
Darkened with shade or flashing with light,
While o'er them the vine to its thicket clings,
And the zephyr stoops to freshen his wings,
But I wish that fate had left me free
To wander these quiet haunts with thee,
Till the eating cares of earth should depart,
And the peace of the scene pass into my heart;
And I envy thy stream, as it glides along
Through its beautiful banks in a trance of song.

Though forced to drudge for the dregs of men,
And scrawl strange words with the barbarous pen,
And mingle among the jostling crowd,
Where the sons of strife are subtle and loud—
I often come to this quiet place,
To breathe the airs that ruffle thy face,
And gaze upon thee in silent dream,
For in thy lonely and lovely stream
An image of that calm life appears
That won my heart in my greener years.

1819 1821

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[1] One who collects simples, herbs.

SUMMER WIND[1]

It is a sultry day; the sun has drunk
The dew that lay upon the morning grass;
There is no rustling in the lofty elm
That canopies my dwelling, and its shade
Scarce cools me. All is silent, save the faint
And interrupted murmur of the bee,
Settling on the sick flowers, and then again
Instantly on the wing. The plants around
Feel the too potent fervors: the tall maize
Rolls up its long green leaves; the clover droops
Its tender foliage, and declines its blooms.
But far in the fierce sunshine tower the hills,
With all their growth of woods, silent and stern,
As if the scorching heat and dazzling light
Were but an element they loved. Bright clouds,
Motionless pillars of the brazen heaven—
Their bases on the mountains—their white tops
Shining in the far ether—fire the air
With a reflected radiance, and make turn
The gazer's eye away. For me, I lie
Languidly in the shade, where the thick turf,
Yet virgin from the kisses of the sun,
Retains some freshness, and I woo the wind
That still delays his coming. Why so slow,
Gentle and voluble spirit of the air?
Oh, come and breathe upon the fainting earth
Coolness and life. Is it that in his caves
He hears me? See, on yonder woody ridge,
The pine is bending his proud top, and now
Among the nearer groves, chestnut and oak
Are tossing their green boughs about. He comes;
Lo, where the grassy meadow runs in waves!
The deep distressful silence of the scene
Breaks up with mingling of unnumbered sounds
And universal motion. He is come,
Shaking a shower of blossoms from the shrubs,
And bearing on their fragrance; and he brings
Music of birds, and rustling of young boughs,
And sound of swaying branches, and the voice
Of distant waterfalls. All the green herbs
Are stirring in his breath; a thousand flowers,
By the road-side and the borders of the brook,
Nod gayly to each other; glossy leaves
Are twinkling in the sun, as if the dew
Were on them yet, and silver waters break
Into small waves and sparkle as he comes.

1824 1824

THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS

The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown and sere.
Heaped in the hollows of the grove, the autumn leaves lie dead;
They rustle to the eddying gust, and to the rabbit's tread;
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs the jay,
And from the wood-top calls the crow through all the gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that lately sprang and stood
In brighter light and softer airs, a beauteous sisterhood?
Alas! they all are in their graves, the gentle race of flowers
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good of ours.
The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold November rain
Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones again.[1]

The wind-flower and the violet, they perished long ago,
And the brier-rose and the orchis died amid the summer glow;
But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the wood,
And the yellow sun-flower by the brook, in autumn beauty stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the plague on men,
And the brightness of their smile was gone, from upland, glade, and glen.

And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still such days will come,
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their winter home;

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[1] It may be noted that wind is the element most influential in Bryant's poetic moods.

[1] Despite the presence in Bryant's work of a good deal of "poetic diction" inherited from his eighteenth century models, there is a realism in his pictures that rids them of artificiality. *The Death of the Flowers* may well be compared with Tennyson's *Song*, "A spirit haunts the year's last hours."

When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though all the trees are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance late he bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream no more.

And then I think of one who in her youthful beauty died,
The fair meek blossom that grew up and faded by my side.
In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the forest cast the leaf,
And we wept that one so lovely should have a life so brief:
Yet not unmeet it was that one, like that young friend of ours,
So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the flowers.

1825 1825

"OH FAIREST OF THE RURAL MAIDS"[1]

Oh, fairest of the rural maids!
Thy birth was in the forest shades;
Green boughs, and glimpses of the sky,
Were all that met thine infant eye.

Thy sports, thy wanderings, when a child,
Were ever in the sylvan wild;
And all the beauty of the place
Is in thy heart and on thy face.

The twilight of the trees and rocks
Is in the light shade of thy locks;
Thy step is as the wind, that weaves
Its playful way among the leaves.

Thy eyes are springs, in whose serene
And silent waters heaven is seen;
Their lashes are the herbs that look
On their young figures in the brook.

The forest depths, by foot unpressed,
Are not more sinless than thy breast;
The holy peace, that fills the air
Of those calm solitudes, is there.

1820 1832

A FOREST HYMN

The groves were God's first temples. Ere man learned
To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,
And spread the roof above them—ere he framed
The lofty vault, to gather and roll back
The sound of anthems; in the darkling wood,
Amid the cool and silence, he knelt down,
And offered to the Mightiest solemn thanks
And supplication. For his simple heart
Might not resist the sacred influences
Which, from the stilly twilight of the place,
And from the gray old trunks that high in heaven
Mingled their mossy boughs, and from the sound
Of the invisible breath that swayed at once
All their green tops, stole over him, and bowed
His spirit with the thought of boundless power
And inaccessible majesty. Ah, why
Should we, in the world's riper years, neglect
God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore
Only among the crowd, and under roofs
That our frail hands have raised? Let me, at least,
Here, in the shadow of this aged wood,
Offer one hymn—thrice happy, if it find
Acceptance in His ear.

Father, thy hand
Hath reared these venerable columns, thou
Didst weave this verdant roof. Thou didst look down
Upon the naked earth, and, forthwith, rose
All these fair ranks of trees. They, in thy sun,
Budded, and shook their green leaves in thy breeze,
And shot toward heaven. The century-living crow,
Whose birth was in their tops, grew old and died
Among their branches, till, at last, they stood,
As now they stand, massy, and tall, and dark,
Fit shrine for humble worshiper to hold
Communion with his Maker. These dim vaults,
These winding aisles, of human pomp or pride
Report not. No fantastic carvings show
The boast of our vain race to change the form
Of thy fair works. But thou art here—thou fill'st
The solitude. Thou art in the soft winds
That run along the summit of these trees
In music; thou art in the cooler breath
That from the inmost darkness of the place

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[1] These verses Bryant addressed to his wife. Comparison with *"She was a phantom of delight,"* written by Wordsworth to his own wife, is illuminating.

Comes, scarcely felt; the barky trunks, the ground,
The fresh moist ground, are all instinct with thee.
Here is continual worship;—Nature, here,
In the tranquillity that thou dost love,
Enjoys thy presence. Noiselessly, around,
From perch to perch, the solitary bird
Passes; and yon clear spring, that, midst its herbs,
Wells softly forth and wandering steeps the roots
Of half the mighty forest, tells no tale
Of all the good it does. Thou hast not left
Thyself without a witness, in these shades,
Of thy perfections. Grandeur, strength, and grace
Are here to speak of thee. This mighty oak—
By whose immovable stem I stand and seem
Almost annihilated—not a prince,
In all that proud old world beyond the deep,
E'er wore his crown as loftily as he
Wears the green coronal of leaves with which
Thy hand has graced him. Nestled at his root
Is beauty, such as blooms not in the glare
Of the broad sun. That delicate forest flower,
With scented breath and look so like a smile,
Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mold,
An emanation of the indwelling Life,
A visible token of the upholding Love,
That are the soul of this wide universe.

My heart is awed within me when I think
Of the great miracle that still goes on,
In silence, round me—the perpetual work
Of thy creation, finished, yet renewed
Forever. Written on thy works I read
The lesson of thy own eternity.
Lo! all grow old and die—but see again,
How on the faltering footsteps of decay
Youth presses—ever gay and beautiful youth
In all its beautiful forms. These lofty trees
Wave not less proudly that their ancestors
Molder beneath them.[1] Oh, there is not lost
One of earth's charms: upon her bosom yet,
After the flight of untold centuries,
The freshness of her far beginning lies
And yet shall lie. Life mocks the idle hate
Of his arch enemy Death—yea, seats himself
Upon the tyrant's throne— the sepulcher,
And of the triumphs of his ghastly foe
Makes his own nourishment. For he came forth
From thine own bosom, and shall have no end.

There have been holy men who hid themselves
Deep in the woody wilderness, and gave
Their lives to thought and prayer, till they outlived
The generation born with them, nor seemed
Less aged than the hoary trees and rocks
Around them;—and there have been holy men
Who deemed it were not well to pass life thus.
But let me often to these solitudes
Retire, and in thy presence reassure
My feeble virtue. Here its enemies,
The passions, at thy plainer footsteps shrink
And tremble and are still. Oh, God! when thou
Dost scare the world with tempests, set on fire
The heavens with falling thunderbolts, or fill,
With all the waters of the firmament,
The swift dark whirlwind that uproots the woods
And drowns the villages; when, at thy call,
Uprises the great deep and throws himself
Upon the continent, and overwhelms
Its cities—who forgets not, at the sight
Of these tremendous tokens of thy power,
His pride, and lays his strifes and follies by?
Oh, from these sterner aspects of thy face
Spare me and mine, nor let us need the wrath
Of the mad unchained elements to teach
Who rules them. Be it ours to meditate,
In these calm shades, thy milder majesty,
And to the beautiful order of thy works
Learn to conform the order of our lives.

1825 1825

JUNE

I gazed upon the glorious sky
And the green mountains round,
And thought that when I came to lie

---

[1] Bryant's method of treating this idea is pointedly in contrast with that of Omar Khayyam, *Rubaiyat,* xx:

"And this delightful herb of tender Green
Fledges the River's Lip on which we lean—
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely lip it springs unseen!"

At rest within the ground,
'T were pleasant, that in flowery June,
When brooks send up a cheerful tune,
And groves a joyous sound,
The sexton's hand, my grave to make,
The rich, green mountain-turf should break.[1]

A cell within the frozen mold,
A coffin borne through sleet,
And icy clods above it rolled,
While fierce the tempests beat—
Away!—I will not think of these—
Blue be the sky and soft the breeze,
Earth green beneath the feet,
And be the damp mold gently pressed
Into my narrow place of rest.

There through the long, long summer hours,
The golden light should lie,
And thick young herbs and groups of flowers
Stand in their beauty by.
The oriole should build and tell
His love-tale close beside my cell;
The idle butterfly
Should rest him there, and there be heard
The housewife bee and humming-bird.

And what if cheerful shouts at noon
Come, from the village sent,
Or songs of maids, beneath the moon
With fairy laughter blent?
And what if, in the evening light,
Betrothed lovers walk in sight
Of my low monument?
I would the lovely scene around
Might know no sadder sight nor sound.

I know that I no more should see
The season's glorious show,
Nor would its brightness shine for me,
Nor its wild music flow;
But if, around my place of sleep,
The friends I love should come to weep,
They might not haste to go.
Soft airs, and song, and light, and bloom
Should keep them lingering by my tomb.

These to their softened hearts should bear
The thought of what has been,
And speak of one who cannot share
The gladness of the scene;
Whose part, in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills,
Is that his grave is green;
And deeply would their hearts rejoice
To hear again his living voice.

1825 **1826**

THE PAST

Thou unrelenting Past![1]
Strong are the barriers round thy dark domain,
And fetters, sure and fast,
Hold all that enter thy unbreathing reign.

Far in thy realm withdrawn
Old empires sit in sullenness and gloom,
And glorious ages gone
Lie deep within the shadow of thy womb.

Childhood, with all its mirth,
Youth, Manhood, Age that draws us to the ground,
And last, Man's Life on earth,
Glide to thy dim dominions, and are bound.

Thou hast my better years;
Thou hast my earlier friends, the good, the kind,
Yielded to thee with tears;
The venerable form, the exalted mind.

My spirit yearns to bring
The lost ones back—yearns with desire intense,
And struggles hard to wring
Thy bolts apart, and pluck thy captives thence.

In vain; thy gates deny
All passage save to those who hence depart;
Nor to the streaming eye
Thou giv'st them back—nor to the broken heart.

In thy abysses hide
Beauty and excellence unknown; to thee
Earth's wonder and her pride
Are gathered, as the waters to the sea;

Labors of good to man,
Unpublished charity, unbroken faith,
Love, that midst grief began,

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[1] Bryant died June 12th, 1878.

[1] The theme of this poem is the same as that of the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, li.
"The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it."

And grew with years, and faltered not in death.

Full many a mighty name
Lurks in thy depths, unuttered, unrevered;
With thee are silent fame,
Forgotten arts, and wisdom disappeared.

Thine for a space are they—
Yet shalt thou yield thy treasures up at last:
Thy gates shall yet give way,
Thy bolts shall fall, inexorable Past!

All that of good and fair
Has gone into thy womb from earliest time,
Shall then come forth to wear
The glory and the beauty of its prime.

They have not perished—no!
Kind words, remembered voices once so sweet,
Smiles, radiant, long ago,
And features, the great soul's apparent seat.

All shall come back; each tie
Of pure affection shall be knit again;
Alone shall Evil die,
And Sorrow dwell a prisoner in thy reign.

And then shall I behold
Him, by whose kind paternal side I sprung,
And her, who, still and cold,
Fills the next grave—the beautiful and young.

1828 1829

THE EVENING WIND

Spirit that breathest through my lattice, thou
That cool'st the twilight of the sultry day,
Gratefully flows thy freshness round my brow;
Thou hast been out upon the deep at play,
Riding all day the wild blue waves till now,
Roughening their crests, and scattering high their spray,
And swelling the white sail. I welcome thee
To the scorched land, thou wanderer of the sea!

Nor I alone; a thousand bosoms round
Inhale thee in the fulness of delight;
And languid forms rise up, and pulses bound
Livelier, at coming of the wind of night;
And, languishing to hear thy grateful sound,
Lies the vast inland stretched beyond the sight.
Go forth into the gathering shade; go forth,
God's blessing breathed upon the fainting earth!

Go, rock the little wood-bird in his nest,
Curl the still waters, bright with stars, and rouse
The wide old wood from his majestic rest,
Summoning from the innumerable boughs
The strange, deep harmonies that haunt his breast:
Pleasant shall be thy way where meekly bows
The shutting flower, and darkling waters pass,
And where the o'ershadowing branches sweep the grass.

The faint old man shall lean his silver head
To feel thee; thou shalt kiss the child asleep,
And dry the moistened curls that overspread
His temples, while his breathing grows more deep;
And they who stand about the sick man's bed
Shall joy to listen to thy distant sweep,
And softly part his curtains to allow
Thy visit, grateful to his burning brow.

Go—but the circle of eternal change,
Which is the life of Nature, shall restore,
With sounds and scents from all thy mighty range,
Thee to thy birthplace of the deep once more;
Sweet odors in the sea-air, sweet and strange,
Shall tell the homesick mariner of the shore;
And, listening to thy murmur, he shall deem
He hears the rustling leaf and running stream.

1829 1830

TO THE FRINGED GENTIAN

Thou blossom bright with autumn dew,
And colored with the heaven's own blue,
That openest when the quiet light
Succeeds the keen and frosty night,

Thou comest not when violets lean
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,

Or columbines, in purple dressed,
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

Thou waitest late and com'st alone,
When woods are bare and birds are flown,
And frosts and shortening days portend
The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue—blue—as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall.

I would that thus, when I shall see
The hour of death draw near to me,
Hope, blossoming within my heart,
May look to heaven as I depart.

1829 1832

SONG OF MARION'S MEN[1]

Our band is few but true and tried,
Our leader frank and bold;
The British soldier trembles
When Marion's name is told.
Our fortress is the good greenwood,
Our tent the cypress-tree;
We know the forest round us,
As seamen know the sea.
We know its walls of thorny vines,
Its glades of reedy grass,
Its safe and silent islands
Within the dark morass.

Woe to the English soldiery
That little dread us near!
On them shall light at midnight
A strange and sudden fear:
When, waking to their tents on fire,
They grasp their arms in vain,
And they who stand to face us
Are beat to earth again;
And they who fly in terror deem
A mighty host behind,
And hear the tramp of thousands
Upon the hollow wind.

Then sweet the hour that brings release
From danger and from toil:
We talk the battle over,
And share the battle's spoil.
The woodland rings with laugh and shout,
As if a hunt were up,
And woodland flowers are gathered
To crown the soldier's cup.
With merry songs we mock the wind
That in the pine-top grieves,
And slumber long and sweetly
On beds of oaken leaves.

Well knows the fair and friendly moon
The band that Marion leads—
The glitter of their rifles,
The scampering of their steeds.
'Tis life to guide the fiery barb
Across the moonlight plain;
'Tis life to feel the night-wind
That lifts the tossing mane
A moment in the British camp—
A moment—and away
Back to the pathless forest,
Before the peep of day.

Grave men there are by broad Santee,
Grave men with hoary hairs;
Their hearts are all with Marion,
For Marion are their prayers.
And lovely ladies greet our band
With kindliest welcoming,
With smiles like those of summer,
And tears like those of spring.
For them we wear these trusty arms,
And lay them down no more
Till we have driven the Briton,
Forever, from our shore.

1831 1831

THE PRAIRIES[1]

These are the gardens of the Desert, these
The unshorn fields, boundless and beautiful,
For which the speech of England has no name—
The Prairies. I behold them for the first,
And my heart swells while the dilated sight
Takes in the encircling vastness. Lo! they stretch
In airy undulations, far away,
As if the ocean, in his gentlest swell,
Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed,
And motionless forever.—Motionless?—
No—they are all unchained again. The clouds
Sweep over with their shadows, and, beneath,
The surface rolls and fluctuates to the eye;
Dark hollows seem to glide along and chase
The sunny ridges. Breezes of the South!
Who toss the golden and the flame-like flowers,
And pass the prairie-hawk that, poised on high,

---

[1] General Francis Marion, 1732-95, was the brilliant commander of a force of irregular cavalry that did much to annoy large bodies of British troops, and prevent them from concerted movements against the colonists.

[1] Written when Bryant visited the prairies of Illinois in 1832. The word prairie is the French *prairie*, meadow.

Flaps his broad wings, yet moves not—ye have played
Among the palms of Mexico and vines
Of Texas, and have crisped the limpid brooks
That from the fountains of Sonora glide
Into the calm Pacific—have ye fanned
A nobler or a lovelier scene than this?
Man hath no part in all this glorious work:
The hand that built the firmament hath heaved
And smoothed these verdant swells, and sown their slopes
With herbage, planted them with island groves,
And hedged them round with forests. Fitting floor
For this magnificent temple of the sky—
With flowers whose glory and whose multitude
Rival the constellations! The great heavens
Seem to stoop down upon the scene in love,—
A nearer vault, and of a tenderer blue,
Than that which bends above our eastern hills.

As o'er the verdant waste I guide my steed,
Among the high rank grass that sweeps his sides
The hollow beating of his footstep seems
A sacrilegious sound. I think of those
Upon whose rest he tramples. Are they here—
The dead of other days?—and did the dust
Of these fair solitudes once stir with life
And burn with passion? Let the mighty mounds
That overlook the rivers, or that rise
In the dim forest crowded with old oaks,
Answer. A race that long has passed away
Built them;—a disciplined and populous race[2]
Heaped, with long toil, the earth, while yet the Greek
Was hewing the Pentelicus to forms
Of symmetry, and rearing on its rock
The glittering Parthenon.[3] These ample fields
Nourished their harvests, here their herds were fed,
When haply by their stalls the bison lowed,
And bowed his maned shoulder to the yoke.
All day this desert murmured with their toils,
Till twilight blushed, and lovers walked, and wooed
In a forgotten language, and old tunes,
From instruments of unremembered form,
Gave the soft winds a voice. The red man came—
The roaming hunter tribes, warlike and fierce,
And the mound-builders vanished from the earth.
The solitude of centuries untold
Has settled where they dwelt. The prairie-wolf
Hunts in their meadows, and his fresh-dug den
Yawns by my path. The gopher mines the ground
Where stood their swarming cities. All is gone;
All—save the piles of earth that hold their bones,
The platforms where they worshiped unknown gods,
The barriers which they builded from the soil
To keep the foe at bay—till o'er the walls
The wild beleaguerers broke, and, one by one,
The strongholds of the plain were forced and heaped
With corpses. The brown vultures of the wood
Flocked to those vast uncovered sepulchers,
And sat, unscared and silent, at their feast.
Haply some solitary fugitive,
Lurking in marsh and forest, till the sense
Of desolation and of fear became
Bitterer than death, yielded himself to die.
Man's better nature triumphed then. Kind words
Welcomed and soothed him; the rude conquerors
Seated the captive with their chiefs; he chose
A bride among their maidens, and at length
Seemed to forget—yet ne'er forgot—the wife
Of his first love, and her sweet little ones,
Butchered amid their shrieks, with all his race.

Thus change the forms of being. Thus arise
Races of living things, glorious in strength,
And perish, as the quickening breath of God

---

[2] The mound builders, to whom Bryant here refers, are now generally supposed by archæologists to have been of the same general race as the Indians of more modern times.

[3] The Parthenon, situated on the acropolis of Athens, the highest point of the city, was built from marble quarried at Mount Pentelicus.

Fills them, or is withdrawn. The red man, too,
Has left the blooming wilds he ranged so long,
And, nearer to the Rocky Mountains, sought
A wider hunting-ground. The beaver builds
No longer by these streams, but far away,
On waters whose blue surface ne'er gave back
The white man's face—among Missouri's springs,
And pools whose issues swell the Oregon—
He rears his little Venice. In these plains
The bison feeds no more. Twice twenty leagues
Beyond remotest smoke of hunter's camp,
Roams the majestic brute, in herds that shake
The earth with thundering steps—yet here I meet
His ancient footprints stamped beside the pool.

Still this great solitude is quick with life.
Myriads of insects, gaudy as the flowers
They flutter over, gentle quadrupeds,
And birds, that scarce have learned the fear of man,
Are here, and sliding reptiles of the ground,
Startlingly beautiful. The graceful deer
Bounds to the wood at my approach. The bee,
A more adventurous colonist than man,
With whom he came across the eastern deep,
Fills the savannas with his murmurings,
And hides his sweets, as in the golden age,
Within the hollow oak. I listen long
To his domestic hum, and think I hear
The sound of that advancing multitude
Which soon shall fill these deserts. From the ground
Comes up the laugh of children, the soft voice
Of maidens, and the sweet and solemn hymn
Of Sabbath worshipers; the low of herds
Blends with the rustling of the heavy grain
Over the dark-brown furrows. All at once
A fresher wind sweeps by, and breaks my dream,
And I am in the wilderness alone.

1832 1833

THE BATTLE-FIELD

Once this soft turf, this rivulet's sands,
Were trampled by a hurrying crowd,
And fiery hearts and armed hands
Encountered in the battle-cloud.

Ah! never shall the land forget
How gushed the life-blood of her brave;
Gushed, warm with hope and valor yet,
Upon the soil they fought to save.

Now all is calm, and fresh, and still;
Alone the chirp of flitting bird,
And talk of children on the hill,
And bell of wandering kine, are heard.

No solemn host goes trailing by
The black-mouthed gun and staggering wain;
Men start not at the battle-cry,
Oh, be it never heard again!

Soon rested those who fought; but thou
Who minglest in the harder strife
For truths which men receive not now,
Thy warfare only ends with life.

A friendless warfare! lingering long
Through weary day and weary year,
A wild and many-weaponed throng
Hang on thy front, and flank, and rear.

Yet nerve thy spirit to the proof,
And blench not at thy chosen lot.
The timid good may stand aloof,
The sage may frown—yet faint thou not.

Nor heed the shaft too surely cast,
The foul and hissing bolt of scorn;
For with thy side shall dwell, at last,
The victory of endurance born.

Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again;
Th' eternal years of God are hers;
But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies among his worshipers.[1]

Yea, though thou lie upon the dust,
When those who helped thee flee in fear,
Die full of hope and manly trust,
Like those who fell in battle here.

Another hand thy sword shall wield,
Another hand the standard wave,
Till from the trumpet's mouth is pealed
The blast of triumph o'er thy grave.

1835

ROBERT OF LINCOLN

Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,

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[1] Probably the best known stanza of Bryant.

Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gayly drest,
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest.
Hear him call in his merry note:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Look what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;
One weak chirp is her only note.
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can!
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day,
Robert is singing with all his might:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell
Six wide mouths are open for food;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work, and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

1855 1855

WAITING BY THE GATE[1]

Beside a massive gateway built up in years gone by,
Upon whose top the clouds in eternal shadow lie,
While streams the evening sunshine on quiet wood and lea,
I stand and calmly wait till the hinges turn for me.

The tree-tops faintly rustle beneath the breeze's flight,
A soft and soothing sound, yet it whispers of the night;
I hear the wood-thrush piping one mellow descant more,
And scent the flowers that blow when the heat of day is o'er.

Behold, the portals open, and o'er the threshold, now,
There steps a weary one with a pale and furrowed brow;
His count of years is full, his allotted task is wrought;
He passes to his rest from a place that needs him not.

In sadness then I ponder how quickly fleets the hour
Of human strength and action, man's courage and his power.
I muse while still the wood-thrush sings down the golden day,
And as I look and listen the sadness wears away.

Again the hinges turn, and a youth, departing, throws

---

[1] Cf. Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar*, and Browning's *Prospice*.

A look of longing backward, and sorrowfully goes;
A blooming maid, unbinding the roses from her hair,
Moves mournfully away from amid the young and fair.

O glory of our race that so suddenly decays!
O crimson flush of morning that darkens as we gaze!
O breath of summer blossoms that on the restless air
Scatters a moment's sweetness, and flies we know not where!

I grieve for life's bright promise, just shown and then withdrawn;
But still the sun shines round me: the evening bird sings on,
And I again am soothed, and, beside the ancient gate,
In this soft evening sunlight, I calmly stand and wait.

Once more the gates are opened; an infant group go out,
The sweet smile quenched forever, and stilled the sprightly shout.
O frail, frail tree of Life, that upon the greensward strows
Its fair young buds unopened, with every wind that blows!

So come from every region, so enter, side by side,
The strong and faint of spirit, the meek and men of pride.
Steps of earth's great and mighty, between those pillars gray,
And prints of little feet, mark the dust along the way.

And some approach the threshold whose looks are blank with fear,
And some whose temples brighten with joy in drawing near,
As if they saw dear faces, and caught the gracious eye
Of Him, the Sinless Teacher, who came for us to die.

I mark the joy, the terror; yet these, within my heart,
Can neither wake the dread nor the longing to depart;
And, in the sunshine streaming on quiet wood and lea,
I stand and calmly wait till the hinges turn for me.

1860 1864

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

Born, New York, 1795, died there, 1820. After obtaining a good schooling which cost him much in effort against adverse circumstances, Drake for a time was employed in business and then took up the study of medicine, in which he received a degree. Shortly after, he married a woman of means, visited Europe, but died from consumption less than two years after his return. With Halleck he contributed in 1819 to the New York *Evening Post* a series of poems over the signature of "Croaker & Co."

THE AMERICAN FLAG

When Freedom from her mountain height
  Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
  And set the stars of glory there;
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies,
And striped its pure, celestial white
With streakings of the morning light;
Then from his mansion in the sun
She called her eagle bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land.

Majestic monarch of the cloud,
  Who rear'st aloft thy regal form,
To hear the tempest-trumpings loud
And see the lightning-lances driven,
  When strive the warriors of the storm,
And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven—
Child of the sun! to thee 'tis given
To guard the banner of the free,
To hover in the sulphur smoke
To ward away the battle-stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
  The harbingers of victory!

Flag of the brave! thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph high,
When speaks the signal-trumpet tone,
And the long line comes gleaming on.
Ere yet the life-blood, warm and wet,
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,
Each soldier eye shall brightly turn
Where thy sky-born glories burn,
And, as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance.
And when the cannon-mouthings loud
Heave in wild wreaths the battle shroud,
And gory sabers rise and fall
Like shoots of flame on midnight's pall,
  Then shall thy meteor-glances glow,
And cowering foes shall shrink beneath
  Each gallant arm that strikes below
That lovely messenger of death.

Flag of the seas! on ocean wave
Thy stars shall glitter o'er the brave;
When death, careering on the gale,
Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,
And frighted waves rush wildly back
Before the broadside's reeling rack,
Each dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look at once to heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendors fly
In triumph o'er his closing eye.

Flag of the free heart's hope and home!
By angel hands to valor given;
The stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven.
Forever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us?

1819 1819

THE CULPRIT FAY[1]

I

'Tis the middle watch of a summer's night—
The earth is dark, but the heavens are bright;
Naught is seen in the vault on high
But the moon, and the stars, and the cloudless sky,
And the flood which rolls its milky hue,
A river of light on the welkin blue.
The moon looks down on old Cronest,
She mellows the shades on his shaggy breast,
And seems his huge gray form to throw
In a silver cone on the wave below;
His sides are broken by spots of shade,
By the walnut bough and the cedar made,
And through their clustering branches dark
Glimmers and dies the fire-fly's spark—
Like starry twinkles that momently break,
Through the rifts of the gathering tempest's rack.

II

The stars are on the moving stream,
And fling, as its ripples gently flow,
A burnished length of wavy beam
In an eel-like, spiral line below;
The winds are whist, and the owl is still,
The bat in the shelvy rock is hid,
And naught is heard on the lonely hill
But the cricket's chirp, and the answer shrill
Of the gauze-winged katy-did;
And the plaint of the wailing whip-poor-will,
Who moans unseen, and ceaseless sings,
Ever a note of wail and woe,
Till morning spreads her rosy wings,
And earth and sky in her glances glow.

III

'Tis the hour of fairy ban and spell;
The wood-tick has kept the minutes well;
He has counted them all with click and stroke
Deep in the heart of the mountain oak,
And he has awakened the sentry elve
Who sleeps with him in the haunted tree,
To bid him ring the hour of twelve,
And call the fays to their revelry;
Twelve small strokes on his tinkling bell—
('Twas made of the white snail's pearly shell;)
"Midnight comes, and all is well!
Hither, hither, wing your way!
'Tis the dawn of the fairy-day."

IV

They come from beds of lichen green,
They creep from the mullein's velvet screen;
Some on the backs of beetles fly
From the silver tops of moon-touched trees,
Where they swung in their cobweb hammocks high,
And rocked about in the evening breeze;
Some from the hum-bird's downy nest—
They had driven him out by elfin power,
And pillowed on plumes of his rainbow breast,
Had slumbered there till the charmed hour;
Some had lain in the scoop of the rock,
With glittering ising-stars[2] inlaid;
And some had opened the four-o'clock,
And stole within its purple shade.
And now they throng the moonlight glade,
Above—below—on every side,
Their little minim[3] forms arrayed
In the tricksy pomp of fairy pride!

---

[1] The poem was written by Drake perhaps as early as 1816, as an answer to one of his friends who remarked that it would be difficult to write a fairy poem without the aid of human characters. See also note, Newcomer's *American Literature*, p. 96. Imperfect and youthful in workmanship though it is, it showed promise, brought a note of more lively imagination into American poetry, and made Drake's early death greatly lamented.

[2] A word irregularly compounded from *isinglass*.

[3] very least; smallest

V

They come not now to print the lea,
In freak and dance around the tree,
Or at the mushroom board to sup,
And drink the dew from the buttercup;
A scene of sorrow waits them now,
For an Ouphe[4] has broken his vestal vow;
He has loved an earthly maid,
And left for her his woodland shade;
He has lain upon her lip of dew,
And sunned him in her eye of blue,
Fanned her cheek with his wing of air,
Played in the ringlets of her hair,
And, nestling on her snowy breast,
Forgot the lily-king's behest.
For this the shadowy tribes of air
To the elfin court must haste away:—
And now they stand expectant there,
To hear the doom of the culprit Fay.

VI

The throne was reared upon the grass,
Of spice-wood and the sassafras;
On pillars of mottled tortoise-shell
Hung the burnished canopy—
And over it gorgeous curtains fell
Of the tulip's crimson drapery.
The monarch sat on his judgment-seat,
On his brow the crown imperial shone,
The prisoner Fay was at his feet,
And his peers were ranged around the throne.
He waved his scepter in the air,
He looked around and calmly spoke;
His brow was grave and his eye severe,
But his voice in a softened accent broke:

VII

"Fairy! Fairy! list and mark:
Thou hast broke thine elfin chain;[5]
Thy flame-wood lamp is quenched and dark,
And thy wings are dyed with a deadly stain—
Thou hast sullied thine elfin purity
In the glance of a mortal maiden's eye,
Thou hast scorned our dread decree,
And thou shouldst pay the forfeit high.
But well I know her sinless mind
Is pure as the angel forms above,
Gentle and meek, and chaste and kind,
Such as a spirit well might love;
Fairy! had she spot or taint,
Bitter had been thy punishment.
Tied to the hornet's shardy wings;
Tossed on the pricks of nettle's stings;
Or seven long ages doomed to dwell
With the lazy worm in the walnut-shell;
Or every night to writhe and bleed
Beneath the tread of the centipede;
Or bound in a cobweb dungeon dim,
Your jailer a spider huge and grim,
Amid the carrion bodies to lie,
Of the worm, and the bug, and the murdered fly;
These it had been your lot to bear,
Had a stain been found on the earthly fair.
Now list, and mark our mild decree—
Fairy, this your doom must be:

VIII

"Thou shalt seek the beach of sand
Where the water bounds the elfin land;
Thou shalt watch the oozy brine
Till the sturgeon leaps in the bright moonshine,
Then dart the glistening arch below,
And catch a drop from his silver bow.
The water-sprites will wield their arms
And dash around, with roar and rave,
And vain are the woodland spirits' charms,
They are the imps that rule the wave.
Yet trust thee in thy single might:
If thy heart be pure and thy spirit right,
Thou shalt win the warlock[6] fight.

IX

"If the spray-bead gem be won,
The stain of thy wing is washed away:
But another errand must be done
Ere thy crime be lost for aye;
Thy flame-wood lamp is quenched and dark;
Thou must reillume its spark.
Mount thy steed and spur him high
To the heaven's blue canopy;
And when thou seest a shooting star,
Follow it fast, and follow it far—
The last faint spark of its burning train
Shall light the elfin lamp again.
Thou hast heard our sentence, Fay;
Hence! to the water-side, away!"

X

The goblin marked his monarch well;
He spake not, but he bowed him low,
Then plucked a crimson colen-bell,[7]
And turned him round in act to go.
The way is long, he cannot fly,
His soiled wing has lost its power,
And he winds adown the mountain high,

---

[4] oaf; strictly, a changeling left by fairies; here a recalcitrant fairy

[5] Possibly the mystic bond of purity that bound him to the other fays.

[6] wizard

[7] Perhaps the columbine.

For many a sore and weary hour.
Through dreary beds of tangled fern,
Through groves of nightshade dark and dern,[8]
Over the grass and through the brake,
Where toils the ant and sleeps the snake;
Now over the violet's azure flush
He skips along in lightsome mood;
And now he thrids[9] the bramble-bush,
Till its points are dyed in fairy blood.
He has leaped the bog, he has pierced the brier,
He has swum the brook, and waded the mire,
Till his spirits sank, and his limbs grew weak,
And the red waxed fainter in his cheek.
He had fallen to the ground outright,
For rugged and dim was his onward track,
But there came a spotted toad in sight,
And he laughed as he jumped upon her back:
He bridled her mouth with a silkweed twist,
He lashed her sides with an osier thong;
And now through evening's dewy mist,
With leap and spring they bound along,
Till the mountain's magic verge is past,
And the beach of sand is reached at last.

XI

Soft and pale is the moony beam,
Moveless still the glassy stream;
The wave is clear, the beach is bright
With snowy shells and sparkling stones;
The shore-surge comes in ripples light,
In murmurings faint, and distant moans;
And ever afar in the silence deep
Is heard the splash of the sturgeon's leap,
And the bend of his graceful bow is seen—
A glittering arch of silver sheen,
Spanning the wave of burnished blue,
And dripping with gems of the river-dew.

XII

The elfin cast a glance around,
As he lighted down from his courser toad,
Then round his breast his wings he wound,
And close to the river's brink he strode;
He sprang on a rock, he breathed a prayer,
Above his head his arms he threw,
Then tossed a tiny curve in air,
And headlong plunged in the waters blue.

XIII

Up sprung the spirits of the waves,
From the sea-silk beds in their coral caves,
With snail-plate armor snatched in haste,
They speed their way through the liquid waste;
Some are rapidly borne along
On the mailed shrimp or the prickly prong,[10]
Some on blood-red leeches glide,
Some on the stony star-fish ride,
Some on the back of the lancing squab,[11]
Some on the sideling soldier-crab;
And some on the jellied quarl,[12] that flings
At once a thousand streamy stings;
They cut the wave with the living oar,
And hurry on to the moonlight shore,
To guard their realms and chase away
The footsteps of the invading Fay.

XIV

Fearlessly he skims along,
His hope is high, and his limbs are strong,
He spreads his arms like the swallow's wing,
And throws his feet with a frog-like fling;
His locks of gold on the waters shine,
At his breast the tiny foam-beads rise,
His back gleams bright above the brine,
And the wake-line foam behind him lies,
But the water-sprites are gathering near
To check his course along the tide;
Their warriors come in swift career
And hem him round on every side;
On his thigh the leech has fixed his hold,
The quarl's long arms are round him rolled,
The prickly prong has pierced his skin,
And the squab has thrown his javelin,
The gritty star has rubbed him raw,
And the crab has struck with his giant claw,
He howls with rage, and he shrieks with pain,
He strikes around, but his blows are vain;
Hopeless is the unequal fight,
Fairy! naught is left but flight.

XV

He turned him round, and fled amain
With hurry and dash to the beach again.
He twisted over from side to side,
And laid his cheek to the cleaving tide;
The strokes of his plunging arms are fleet,
And with all his might he flings his feet,

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[8] secret
[9] threads
[10] Perhaps prawn, a small crustacean.
[11] squid
[12] jellyfish

But the water-sprites are round him still,
To cross his path and work him ill.
They bade the waves before him rise,
They flung the sea-fire in his eyes,
And they stunned his ears with the scallop-stroke,
With the porpoise heave—and the drum-fish croak.
Oh! but a weary wight was he
When he reached the foot of the dog-wood tree.
Gashed and wounded, and stiff and sore,
He laid him down on the sandy shore;
He blessed the force of the charmed line,
And he banned the water-goblins' spite,
For he saw around in the sweet moonshine
Their little wee faces above the brine,
Giggling and laughing with all their might
At the piteous hap of the Fairy wight.

XVI

Soon he gathered the balsam dew
From the sorrel-leaf and the henbane bud;
Over each wound the balm he drew,
And with cobweb lint he stanched the blood.
The mild west wind was soft and low,
It cooled the heat of his burning brow,
And he felt new life in his sinews shoot,
As he suck'd the juice of the calamus[13] root;
And now he treads the fatal shore,
As fresh and vigorous as before.

XVII

Wrapped in musing stands the sprite;
'Tis the middle wane of night;
His task is hard, his way is far,
But he must do his errand right,
Ere dawning mounts her beamy car,
And rolls her chariot wheels of light;
And vain are the spells of fairy-land:
He must work with a human hand.

XVIII

He cast a saddened look around,
But he felt new joy his bosom swell,
When glittering on the shadowed ground,
He saw a purple mussel-shell;
Thither he ran, and he bent him low,
He heaved at the stern and he heaved at the bow,
And he pushed her over the yielding sand,
Till he came to the verge of the haunted land.
She was as lovely a pleasure-boat
As ever fairy had traveled in,
For she glowed with purple paint without,
And shone with silvery pearl within;
A sculler's notch in the stern he made,
An oar he shaped of the bootle-blade;[14]
Then sprung to his seat with a lightsome leap,
And launched afar, on the calm, blue deep.

XIX

The imps of the river yell and rave;
They had no power above the wave,
But they heaved the billow before the prow,
And they dashed the surge against her side,
And they struck her keel with jerk and blow,
Till the gunwale bent to the rocking tide.
She wimpled[15] about to the pale moonbeam,
Like a feather that floats on a wind-tossed stream;
And momently athwart her track
The quarl upreared his island back,
And the fluttering scallop behind would float,
And spatter the water about the boat;
But he bailed her out with his colen-bell,
And he kept her trimmed with a wary tread,
While on every side like lightning fell
The heavy strokes of his bootle-blade.

XX

Onward still he held his way,
Till he came where the column of moonshine lay,
And saw beneath the surface dim
The brown-backed sturgeon slowly swim;
Around him were the goblin train—
But he sculled with all his might and main,
And followed wherever the sturgeon led,
Till he saw him upward point his head;
Then he dropped his paddle-blade,
And held his colen-goblet up
To catch the drop in its crimson cup.

XXI

With sweeping tail and quivering fin,
Through the wave the sturgeon flew,
And, like the heaven-shot javelin,
He sprung above the waters blue.
Instant as the star-fall light

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[13] sweetflag

[14] Perhaps coined for its alliteration.

[15] Literally, rippled.

He plunged him in the deep again,
But left an arch of silver bright,
The rainbow of the moony main.
It was a strange and lovely sight[16]
To see the puny goblin there;
He seemed an angel form of light,
With azure wings and sunny hair,
Throned on a cloud of purple fair,
Circled with blue and edged with white,
And sitting at the fall of even
Beneath the bow of summer heaven.

XXII

A moment, and its luster fell;
But ere it met the billow blue,
He caught within his crimson bell
A droplet of its sparkling dew—
Joy to thee, Fay! thy task is done,
Thy wings are pure, for the gem is won—
Cheerly ply thy dripping oar,
And haste away to the elfin shore.

XXIII

He turns, and lo! on either side
The ripples on his path divide;
And the track o'er which his boat must pass
Is smooth as a sheet of polished glass,
Around, their limbs the sea-nymphs lave,
With snowy arms half swelling out,
While on the glossed and gleamy wave
Their sea-green ringlets loosely float;
They swim around with smile and song;
They press the bark with pearly hand,
And gently urge her course along,
Toward the beach of speckled sand;
And, as he lightly leaped to land,
They bade adieu with nod and bow,
Then gaily kissed each little hand,
And dropped in the crystal deep below.

XXIV

A moment stayed the fairy there;
He kissed the beach and breathed a prayer;
Then spread his wings of gilded blue,
And on to the elfin court he flew;
As ever ye saw a bubble rise,
And shine with a thousand changing dyes,
Till, lessening far, through ether driven,
It mingles with the hues of heaven;
As, at the glimpse of morning pale,
The lance-fly spreads his silken sail,
And gleams with blendings soft and bright,
Till lost in the shades of fading night;
So rose from earth the lovely Fay—
So vanished, far in heaven away!

Up, Fairy! quit thy chick-weed bower,
The cricket has called the second hour,
Twice again, and the lark will rise
To kiss the streaking of the skies—
Up! thy charmed armor don,
Thou'lt need it ere the night be gone.

XXV

He put his acorn helmet on;
It was plumed of the silk of the thistle down;
The corselet plate that guarded his breast
Was once the wild bee's golden vest;
His cloak, of a thousand mingled dyes,
Was formed of the wings of butterflies;
His shield was the shell of a lady-bug queen,
Studs of gold on a ground of green;
And the quivering lance, which he brandished bright,
Was the sting of a wasp he had slain in fight.
Swift he bestrode his fire-fly steed;
He bared his blade of the bent grass blue;
He drove his spurs of the cockle-seed,
And away like a glance of thought he flew,
To skim the heavens and follow far
The fiery trail of the rocket-star.

XXVI

The moth-fly, as he shot in air,
Crept under the leaf, and hid her there;
The katy-did forgot its lay,
The prowling gnat fled fast away,
The fell mosquito checked his drone
And folded his wings till the Fay was gone,
And the wily beetle dropped his head,
And fell on the ground as if he were dead;
They crouched them close in the darksome shade,
They quaked all o'er with awe and fear,
For they had felt the blue-bent blade,
And writhed at the prick of the elfin spear;
Many a time, on a summer's night,
When the sky was clear and the moon was bright,
They had been roused from the haunted ground
By the yelp and bay of the fairy hound,
They had heard the tiny bugle-horn,
They had heard the twang of the maize-silk string,
When the vine-twig bows were tightly drawn,

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[16] Apparently an echo of Coleridge's *Christabel*, i. 280.

And the nettle-shaft through air was borne,
Feathered with down of the hum-bird's wing.
And now they deemed the courier Ouphe
Some hunter-sprite of the elfin ground;
And they watched till they saw him mount the roof
That canopies the world around;
Then glad they left their covert lair,
And freaked about in the midnight air.

XXVII

Up to the vaulted firmament
His path the fire-fly courser bent,
And at every gallop on the wind,
He flung a glittering spark behind;
He flies like a feather in the blast
Till the first light cloud in heaven is past,
But the shapes of air have begun their work,
And a drizzly mist is round him cast,
He cannot see through the mantle murk,
He shivers with cold, but he urges fast,
Through storm and darkness, sleet and shade;
He lashes his steed and spurs amain,
For shadowy hands have twitched the rein,
And flame-shot tongues around him played,
And near him many a fiendish eye
Glared with a fell malignity,
And yells of rage, and shrieks of fear,
Came screaming on his startled ear.

XXVIII

His wings are wet around his breast,
The plume hangs dripping from his crest,
His eyes are blurred by the lightning's glare,
And his ears are stunned with the thunder's blare,
But he gave a shout, and his blade he drew,
He thrust before and he struck behind,
Till he pierced their cloudy bodies through,
And gashed their shadowy limbs of wind;
Howling the misty specters flew,
They rend the air with frightful cries,
For he has gained the welkin blue,
And the land of clouds beneath him lies.

XXIX

Up to the cope,[17] careering swift
In breathless motion fast,
Fleet as the swallow cuts the drift,
Or the sea-roc rides the blast,
The sapphire sheet of eve is shot,
The sphered moon is past,
The earth but seems a tiny blot
On a sheet of azure cast.
O! it was sweet in the clear moonlight,
To tread the starry plain of even,
To meet the thousand eyes of night,
And feel the cooling breath of heaven!
But the elfin made no stop or stay
Till he came to the bank of the milky-way;
Then he checked his courser's foot,
And watched for the glimpse of the planet-shoot.

XXX

Sudden along the snowy tide
That swelled to meet their footsteps' fall,
The sylphs of heaven were seen to glide,
Attired in sunset's crimson pall;
Around the Fay they weave the dance,
They skip before him on the plain,
And one has taken his wasp-sting lance,
And one upholds his bridle-rein;
With warblings wild they lead him on
To where, through clouds of amber seen,
Studded with stars, resplendent shone
The palace of the sylphid queen.
Its spiral columns, gleaming bright,
Were streamers of the northern light;
Its curtain's light and lovely flush
Was of the morning's rosy blush,
And the ceiling fair, that rose aboon,[18]
The white and feathery fleece of noon.

XXXI

But, O! how fair the shape that lay
Beneath a rainbow bending bright;
She seemed to the entranced Fay
The loveliest of the forms of light;
Her mantle was the purple rolled
At twilight in the west afar;
'Twas tied with threads of dawning gold
And buttoned with a sparkling star.
Her face was like the lily roon[19]
That veils the vestal planet's hue;
Her eyes, two beamlets from the moon,
Set floating in the welkin blue.
Her hair is like the sunny beam,
And the diamond gems which round it gleam
Are the pure drops of dewy even
That ne'er have left their native heaven.

XXXII

She raised her eyes to the wondering sprite,
And they leaped with smiles, for well I ween
Never before in the bowers of light

[17] vault of heaven

[18] above

[19] border

Had the form of an earthly Fay been seen.
Long she looked in his tiny face;
Long with his butterfly cloak she played;
She smoothed his wings of azure lace,
And handled the tassel of his blade;
And as he told in accents low
The story of his love and woe,
She felt new pains in her bosom rise,
And the tear-drop started in her eyes.
And "O! sweet spirit of earth," she cried,
"Return no more to your woodland height,
But ever here with me abide
In the land of everlasting light!
Within the fleecy drift we'll lie,
We'll hang upon the rainbow's rim;
And all the jewels of the sky
Around thy brow shall brightly beam!
And thou shalt bathe thee in the stream
That rolls its whitening foam aboon,
And ride upon the lightning's gleam,
And dance upon the orbed moon!
We'll sit within the Pleiad ring,
We'll rest on Orion's starry belt,
And I will bid my sylphs to sing
The song that makes the dew-mist melt;
Their harps are of the umber shade
That hides the blush of waking day,
And every gleamy string is made
Of silvery moonshine's lengthened ray;
And thou shalt pillow on my breast,
While heavenly breathings float around,
And, with the sylphs of ether blest,
Forget the joys of fairy ground."

XXXIII

She was lovely and fair to see,
And the elfin's heart beat fitfully;
But lovelier far, and still more fair,
The earthly form imprinted there;
Naught he saw in the heavens above
Was half so dear as his mortal love,
For he thought upon her look so meek,
And he thought of the light flush on her cheek;
Never again might he bask and lie
On that sweet cheek and moonlight eye,
But in his dreams her form to see,
To clasp her in his revery,
To think upon his virgin bride,
Was worth all heaven, and earth beside.

XXXIV

"Lady," he cried, "I have sworn tonight,
On the word of a fairy-knight,
To do my sentence-task aright;
My honor scarce is free from stain,
I may not soil its snows again;
Betide me weal, betide me wo,
Its mandate must be answered now."
Her bosom heaved with many a sigh,
The tear was in her drooping eye;
But she led him to the palace-gate,
And called the sylphs who hovered there
And bade them fly and bring him straight
Of clouds condensed a sable car.
With charm and spell she blessed it there,
From all the fiends of upper air;
Then round him cast the shadowy shroud,
And tied his steed behind the cloud;
And pressed his hand as she bade him fly
Far to the verge of the northern sky,
For by its wan and wavering light
There was a star would fall tonight.

XXXV

Borne afar on the wings of the blast,
Northward away, he speeds him fast,
And his courser follows the cloudy wain
Till the hoof-strokes fall like pattering rain.
The clouds roll backward as he flies,
Each flickering star behind him lies,
And he has reached the northern plain,
And backed his fire-fly steed again,
Ready to follow in its flight
The streaming of the rocket-light.

XXXVI

The star is yet in the vault of heaven,
But it rocks in the summer gale;
And now 'tis fitful and uneven,
And now 'tis deadly pale;
And now 'tis wrapped in sulphur-smoke,
And quenched in its rayless beam,
And now with a rattling thunder-stroke
It bursts in flash and flame.
As swift as the glance of the arrowy lance
That the storm-spirit flings from high,
The star-shot flew o'er the welkin blue,
As it fell from the sheeted sky.
As swift as the wind in its trail behind
The elfin gallops along,
The fiends of the cloud are bellowing loud,
But the sylphid charm is strong;
He gallops unhurt in the shower of fire,
While the cloud-fiends fly from the blaze;
He watches each flake till its sparks expire,
And rides in the light of its rays.
But he drove his steed to the lightning's speed,
And caught a glimmering spark;
Then wheeled around to the fairy ground,
And sped through the midnight dark.

Ouphe and Goblin! Imp and Sprite!
Elf of eve! and starry Fay!

Ye that love the moon's soft light,
  Hither, hither wend your way;
Twine ye in a jocund ring,
  Sing and trip it merrily,
Hand to hand, and wing to wing,
  Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

Hail the wanderer again,
  With dance and song, and lute and lyre.
Pure his wing and strong his chain,[20]
  And doubly bright his fairy fire.
Twine ye in an airy round,
  Brush the dew and print the lea;
Skip and gambol, hop and bound,
  Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

XXXVII

The beetle guards our holy ground,
  He flies about the haunted place,
And if mortal there be found,
  He hums in his ears and flaps his face;
The leaf-harp sounds our roundelay,
  The owlet's eyes our lanterns be;
Thus we sing, and dance, and play,
  Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

But, hark! from tower on tree-top high
  The sentry-elf his call has made:
A streak is in the eastern sky,
  Shapes of moonlight! flit and fade!
The hill-tops gleam in morning's spring,
The skylark shakes his dabbled wing,
The day-glimpse glimmers on the lawn,
The cock has crowed, and the Fays are
    gone.

1816?-1819? 1835

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK

Born at Guilford, Connecticut, 1790, died there, 1867. He was educated in the public schools, was clerk and book-keeper in Guilford, removed to New York in 1811, where he remained as a book-keeper and accountant until 1848. In 1813 he made the acquaintance of Drake, whose death was the occasion of one of the best of Halleck's poems. These were published at various dates from 1819 to 1858, chief among them being the "Croaker" poems with Drake, 1819; *Fanny*, 1819; *Alnwick Castle*, 1827. Halleck was one of the most popular poets of his day.

ON THE DEATH OF JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE[1]

OF NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER, 1820

The good die first,
And they whose hearts are dry
as summer dust,
Burn to the socket.
WORDSWORTH.

Green be the turf above thee,
  Friend of my better days!
None knew thee but to love thee,
  Nor named thee but to praise.

Tears fell when thou wert dying,
  From eyes unused to weep,
And long where thou art lying,
  Will tears the cold turf steep.

When hearts, whose truth was proven,
  Like thine, are laid in earth,
There should a wreath be woven
  To tell the world their worth;

And I, who woke each morrow
  To clasp thy hand in mine,
Who shared thy joy and sorrow,
  Whose weal and woe were thine:

It should be mine to braid it
  Around thy faded brow,
But I've in vain essayed it,
  And feel I cannot now.

While memory bids me weep thee,
  Nor thoughts nor words are free,
The grief is fixed too deeply
  That mourns a man like thee.

1820

BURNS

TO A ROSE, BROUGHT FROM NEAR ALLOWAY KIRK,[1] IN AYRSHIRE, IN THE AUTUMN OF 1822

Wild Rose of Alloway! my thanks;
  Thou 'mindst me of that autumn noon
When first we met upon "the banks
  And braes o' bonny Doon."

Like thine, beneath the thorn-tree's bough,
  My sunny hour was glad and brief,
We've crossed the winter sea, and thou
  Art withered—flower and leaf.

And will not thy death-doom be mine—
  The doom of all things wrought of clay—
And withered my life's leaf like thine,
  Wild rose of Alloway?

Not so his memory, for whose sake
  My bosom bore thee far and long,
His—who a humbler flower could make
  Immortal as his song,[2]

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[20] Perhaps, here, armor.

[1] Drake died at the age of twenty-five.

[1] Alloway Kirk is the scene of Tam O'Shanter's adventure; near it are Burns's birthplace and the monument referred to later; and all are near the banks of the River Doon, familiar from Burns's song, *The Banks o' Doon*.

[2] Referring to Burns's *To a Mountain Daisy*.

The memory of Burns—a name
That calls, when brimmed her festal cup,
A nation's glory and her shame,
In silent sadness up.

A nation's glory—be the rest
Forgot—she's canonized his mind;
And it is joy to speak the best
We may of human kind.

I've stood beside the cottage-bed
Where the Bard-peasant first drew breath;
A straw-thatched roof above his head,
A straw-wrought couch beneath.

And I have stood beside the pile,
His monument—that tells to Heaven
The homage of earth's proudest isle
To that Bard-peasant given!

Bid thy thoughts hover o'er that spot,
Boy-minstrel, in thy dreaming hour;
And know, however low his lot,
A Poet's pride and power:

The pride that lifted Burns from earth,
The power that gave a child of song
Ascendency o'er rank and birth,
The rich, the brave, the strong;

And if despondency weigh down
Thy spirit's fluttering pinions then,
Despair—thy name is written on
The roll of common men.

There have been loftier themes than his,
And longer scrolls, and louder lyres,
And lays lit up with Poesy's
Purer and holier fires:

Yet read the names that know not death;
Few nobler ones than Burns are there;
And few have won a greener wreath
Than that which binds his hair.

His is that language of the heart,
In which the answering heart would speak,
Thought, word, that bids the warm tear start,
Or the smile light the cheek;

And his that music, to whose tone
The common pulse of man keeps time,
In cot or castle's mirth or moan,
In cold or sunny clime.

And who hath heard his song, nor knelt
Before its spell with willing knee,
And listened, and believed, and felt
The Poet's mastery

O'er the mind's sea, in calm and storm,
O'er the heart's sunshine and its showers,
O'er Passion's moments bright and warm,
O'er Reason's dark, cold hours;

On fields where brave men "die or do,"
In halls where rings the banquet's mirth,
Where mourners weep, where lovers woo,
From throne to cottage hearth?

What sweet tears dim the eye unshed,
What wild vows falter on the tongue,
When "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled,"
Or "Auld Lang Syne" is sung!

Pure hopes, that lift the soul above,
Come with his Cotter's hymn of praise,
And dreams of youth, and truth, and love,
With "Logan's" banks and braes.

And when he breathes his master-lay
Of Alloway's witch-haunted wall,
All passions in our frames of clay
Come thronging at his call.

Imagination's world of air,
And our own world, its gloom and glee,
Wit, pathos, poetry, are there,
And death's sublimity.

And Burns—though brief the race he ran,
Though rough and dark the path he trod,
Lived—died—in form and soul a Man,
The image of his God.

Through care and pain, and want, and woe,
With wounds that only death could heal,
Tortures—the poor alone can know,
The proud alone can feel;

He kept his honesty and truth,
His independent tongue and pen,
And moved, in manhood as in youth,
Pride of his fellow-men.

Strong sense, deep feeling, passions strong,
A hate of tyrant and of knave,
A love of right, a scorn of wrong,
Of coward and of slave;

A kind, true heart, a spirit high,
That could not fear and would not bow,
Were written in his manly eye
And on his manly brow.

Praise to the bard! his words are driven,
Like flower-seeds by the far winds sown,

Where'er, beneath the sky of heaven,
The birds of fame have flown.

Praise to the man! a nation stood
Beside his coffin with wet eyes,—
Her brave, her beautiful, her good,
As when a loved one dies.

And still, as on his funeral day,
Men stand his cold earth-couch around,
With the mute homage that we pay
To consecrated ground.

And consecrated ground it is,
The last, the hallowed home of one
Who lives upon all memories,
Though with the buried gone.

Such graves as his are pilgrim shrines,
Shrines to no code nor creed confined—
The Delphian vales,[3] the Palestines,
The Meccas of the mind.

Sages with wisdom's garland wreathed,
Crowned kings, and mitered priests of power,
And warriors with their bright swords sheathed,
The mightiest of the hour;

And lowlier names, whose humble home
Is lit by fortune's dimmer star,
Are there—o'er wave and mountain come,
From countries near and far;

Pilgrims whose wandering feet have pressed
The Switzer's snow, the Arab's sand,
Or trod the piled leaves of the West,
My own green forest-land.

All ask the cottage of his birth,
Gaze on the scenes he loved and sung,
And gather feelings not of earth
His fields and streams among.

They linger by the Doon's low trees,
And pastoral Nith, and wooded Ayr,
And round thy sepulchers, Dumfries!
The poet's tomb is there.

But what to them the sculptor's art,
His funeral columns, wreaths and urns?
Wear they not graven on the heart
The name of Robert Burns?

1822 1827

MARCO BOZZARIS[1]

At midnight, in his guarded tent,
The Turk was dreaming of the hour
When Greece, her knee in suppliance bent,
Should tremble at his power:
In dreams, through camp and court, he bore
The trophies of a conqueror;
In dreams his song of triumph heard;
Then wore his monarch's signet ring:
Then pressed that monarch's throne—a king;
As wild his thoughts, and gay of wing,
As Eden's garden bird.

At midnight, in the forest shades,
Bozzaris ranged his Suliote[2] band,
True as the steel of their tried blades,
Heroes in heart and hand.
There had the Persian's thousands stood,
There had the glad earth drunk their blood
On old Platæa's[3] day;
And now there breathed that haunted air
The sons of sires who conquered there,
With arm to strike, and soul to dare,
As quick, as far as they.

An hour passed on—the Turk awoke;
That bright dream was his last;
He woke—to hear his sentries shriek,
"To arms! they come! the Greek! the Greek!"
He woke—to die midst flame, and smoke,
And shout, and groan, and saber-stroke,
And death shots falling thick and fast
As lightnings from the mountain cloud;
And heard, with voice as trumpet loud,
Bozzaris cheer his band:
"Strike—till the last armed foe expires;
Strike—for your altars and your fires;
Strike—for the green graves of your sires;
God—and your native land!"

They fought—like brave men, long and well;
They piled that ground with Moslem slain,
They conquered—but Bozzaris fell,
Bleeding at every vein.
His few surviving comrades saw
His smile when rang their proud hurrah,
And the red field was won;
Then saw in death his eyelids close
Calmly, as to a night's repose,
Like flowers at set of sun.

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[3] At Delphi in Greece was the oracle of the Pythian Apollo, the most famous shrine of the ancient world.

[1] A patriot of the Greek war for independence from the Turks, 1821-29.

[2] The Suliotes, a Greco-Albanian tribe, driven from their own territory in Albania, took active part in this war against the Turks.

[3] At Platæa the Greeks overcame the Persians, 479 B. C.

Come to the bridal-chamber, Death!
Come to the mother's, when she feels,
For the first time, her first-born's breath;
Come when the blessed seals
That close the pestilence are broke,[4]
And crowded cities wail its stroke;
Come in consumption's ghastly form,
The earthquake shock, the ocean storm;
Come when the heart beats high and warm
With banquet song, and dance, and wine;
And thou art terrible—the tear,
The groan, the knell, the pall, the bier;
And all we know, or dream, or fear
Of agony are thine.

But to the hero, when his sword
Has won the battle for the free,
Thy voice sounds like a prophet's word;
And in its hollow tones are heard
The thanks of millions yet to be.
Come, when his task of fame is wrought—
Come, with her laurel-leaf, blood-bought—
Come in her crowning hour—and then
Thy sunken eye's unearthly light
To him is welcome as the sight
Of sky and stars to prisoned men;
Thy grasp is welcome as the hand
Of brother in a foreign land;
Thy summons welcome as the cry
That told the Indian isles were nigh
To the world-seeking Genoese,
When the land wind, from woods of palm,
And orange groves, and fields of balm,
Blew o'er the Haytian seas.

Bozzaris! with the storied brave
Greece nurtured in her glory's time,
Rest thee—there is no prouder grave,
Even in her own proud clime.
She wore no funeral-weeds for thee,
Nor bade the dark hearse wave its plume
Like torn branch from death's leafless tree
In sorrow's pomp and pageantry,
The heartless luxury of the tomb:
But she remembers thee as one
Long loved and for a season gone;
For thee her poet's lyre is wreathed,
Her marble wrought, her music breathed;
For thee she rings the birthday bells;
Of thee her babes' first lisping tells;
For thine her evening prayer is said
At palace couch and cottage bed;
Her soldier, closing with the foe,
Gives for thy sake a deadlier blow;
His plighted maiden, when she fears
For him the joy of her young years,
Thinks of thy fate, and checks her tears:
And she, the mother of thy boys,
Though in her eye and faded cheek
Is read the grief she will not speak,
The memory of her buried joys,
And even she who gave thee birth,
Will, by their pilgrim-circled hearth,
Talk of thy doom without a sigh:
For thou art Freedom's now, and Fame's;
One of the few, the immortal names,
That were not born to die.

1825

NATHANIEL PARKER WILLIS

Born, Portland, Maine, 1806, died, near Newburgh, New York, 1867. Willis was born of staid New England ancestry. His father was founder of the first religious newspaper in the world, the *Boston Recorder*, and later established the *Youth's Companion*. Willis graduated from Yale, 1827, established the *American Monthly Magazine*, in New York, in 1829, and later merged it with the *Mirror*, to which he was a frequent contributor. His published works include *Pencilings by the Way*, 1835, 1844; *A l'Abri, or the Tent Pitched*, 1839; *Loiterings of Travel*, 1840; *Sacred Poems*, 1843; *Poems of Passion*, 1843; *Lady Jane and Humorous Poems*, 1844.

UNSEEN SPIRITS

The shadows lay along Broadway—
'T was near the twilight-tide—
And slowly there a lady fair
Was walking in her pride.
Alone walked she; but viewlessly
Walked spirits at her side:

Peace charmed the street beneath her feet,
And Honor charmed the air;
And all astir looked kind on her,
And called her good as fair;
For all God ever gave to her
She kept with chary care.

She kept with care her beauties rare
From lovers warm and true;
For her heart was cold to all but gold,
And the rich came not to woo—
But honored well are charms to sell
If priests the selling do.

Now walking there was one more fair,—
A slight girl, lily-pale;
And she had unseen company
To make the spirit quail:
'Twixt Want and Scorn she walked forlorn,
And nothing could avail.

No mercy now can clear her brow
For this world's peace to pray;

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[4] Apparently in allusion to the opening of the fourth seal, *Revelation*, vi., 1-8.

For, as love's wild prayer dissolved in air,
  Her woman's heart gave way!—
But the sin forgiven by Christ in heaven
  By man is cursed alway!

1843

From PENCILINGS BY THE WAY

From LETTER LXX[1]

[*A Breakfast with Charles Lamb*]

Invited to breakfast with a gentleman in the Temple[2] to meet Charles Lamb and his sister,—"Elia, and Bridget Elia." I never in my life had an invitation more to my taste. The essays of Elia are certainly the most charming things in the world, and it has been for the last ten years my highest compliment to the literary taste of a friend to present him with a copy. Who has not smiled over the humorous description of Mrs. Battle?[3] Who that has read Elia would not give more to see him than all the other authors of his time put together?

Our host was rather a character. I had brought a letter of introduction to him from Walter Savage Landor, the author of *Imaginary Conversations,* living at Florence, with a request that he would put me in a way of seeing one or two men about whom I had a curiosity, Lamb more particularly. I could not have been recommended to a better person. Mr. R.[4] is a gentleman who, everybody says, *should have been* an author, but who never wrote a book. He is a profound German scholar, has traveled much, is the intimate friend of Southey, Coleridge, and Lamb, has breakfasted with Goethe, traveled with Wordsworth through France and Italy, and spends part of every summer with him, and knows everything and everybody that is distinguished,—in short, is, in his bachelor's chambers in the Temple, the friendly nucleus of a great part of the talent of England.

I arrived a half-hour before Lamb, and had time to learn some of his peculiarities. He lives a little out of London, and is very much of an invalid. Some family circumstances have tended to depress him very much of late years, and unless excited by convivial intercourse, he scarce shows a trace of what he was. He was very much pleased with the American reprint of his Elia, though it contains several things which are not his—written so in his style, however, that it is scarce a wonder the editor should mistake them. If I remember right, they were *Valentine's Day,* the *Nuns of Caverswell,* and *Twelfth Night.* He is excessively given to mystifying his friends, and is never so delighted as when he has persuaded some one into the belief of one of his grave inventions. His amusing biographical sketch of Liston[5] was in this vein, and there was no doubt in anybody's mind that it was authentic, and written in perfectly good faith. Liston was highly enraged with it, and Lamb was delighted in proportion.

There was a rap at the door at last, and enter a gentleman in black small-clothes and gaiters, short and very slight in his person, his head set on his shoulders with a thoughtful forward bent, his hair just sprinkled with gray, a beautiful deep-set eye, aquiline nose, and a very indescribable mouth. Whether it expressed most humor or feeling, good-nature or a kind of whimsical peevishness, or twenty other things which passed over it by turns, I cannot in the least be certain.

His sister, whose literary reputation is associated very closely with her brother's, and who, as the original of "Bridget Elia," is a kind of object for literary affection, came in after him. She is a small, bent figure, evidently a victim to illness, and hears with difficulty. Her face has been, I should think, a fine and handsome one, and her bright gray eye is still full of intelligence and fire. They both seemed quite at home in our friend's chambers, and as there was to be no one else, we immediately drew round the breakfast-table. I had set a large arm-chair for Miss Lamb. "Don't take it, Mary," said Lamb, pulling it away from her very gravely: "it appears as if you were going to have a tooth drawn."

The conversation was very local. Our host and his guest had not met for some weeks, and they had a great deal to say of their mutual friends. Perhaps in this way, however, I saw more of the author; for his manner of speaking of them, and the quaint humor with which he complained of one, and spoke well of another, was so in the vein of his inimitable writings, that I could have fancied myself listening to an audible composition of a new Elia. Nothing could be more delightful than the kindness and affection between the brother and the sister, though Lamb was continually taking advantage of her deafness to mystify her with the most singular gravity upon every topic that was started. "Poor Mary!" said he, "she hears all of an epigram but the point."—"What are you saying of me, Charles?" she asked. "Mr. Willis," said he, raising his voice, "admires *your Confessions of a Drunkard very much;* and I was saying that it was no merit of yours, that you understood the subject." We had been speaking of this admirable essay (which is his own) half an hour before.

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[1] *Pencilings by the Way* (1835) first appeared in the form of letters written for the *Mirror.* They relate Willis's first experiences of foreign society with a gusto that allows the reader at home to lose none of the deliciousness of the event.

[2] The lodgings and offices of barristers in London, in buildings occupying the site of the medieval establishment of the Knights Templar.

[3] *Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist* is one of the *Essays of Elia.*

[4] Henry Crabb Robinson, 1775-1867.

[5] John Liston, 1776-1846. Lamb's nonsensically grave article certainly did not long interrupt the friendship of the two men.

The conversation turned upon literature after a while; and our host, the Templar, could not express himself strongly enough in admiration of Webster's speeches, which he said were exciting the greatest attention among the politicians and lawyers of England. Lamb said, "I don't know much of American authors. Mary, there, devours Cooper's novels with a ravenous appetite, with which I have no sympathy. The only American book I ever read twice was the *Journal* of Edward Woolman, a Quaker preacher and tailor, whose character is one of the finest I ever met with. He tells a story or two[6] about negro slaves, that brought the tears into my eyes. I can read no prose now, though Hazlitt[7] sometimes, to be sure—but then, Hazlitt is worth all modern prose-writers put together."

Mr. R. spoke of buying a book of Lamb's a few days before; and I mentioned my having bought a copy of *Elia* the last day I was in America, to send as a parting gift to one of the most lovely and talented women in our country.

"What did you give for it?" said Lamb.

"About seven and sixpence."

"Permit me to pay you that," said he, and with the utmost earnestness he counted out the money upon the table.

"I never yet wrote anything that would sell," he continued. "I am the publisher's ruin. My last poem won't sell a copy. Have you seen it, Mr. Willis?"

I had not.

"It's only eighteen pence, and I'll give you sixpence toward it;" and he described to me where I should find it sticking up in a shop-window in the Strand.

Lamb ate nothing, and complained in a querulous tone of the veal-pie. There was a kind of potted fish (of which I forget the name at this moment) which he had expected our friend would procure for him. He inquired whether there was not a morsel left perhaps in the bottom of the last pot. Mr. R. was not sure.

"Send and see," said Lamb; "and if the pot has been cleaned, bring me the cover. I think the sight of it would do me good."

The cover was brought, upon which there was a picture of the fish. Lamb kissed it with a reproachful look at his friend, and then left the table, and began to wander round the room with a broken, uncertain step, as if he almost forgot to put one leg before the other. His sister rose after a while, and commenced walking up and down very much in the same manner on the opposite side of the table; and in the course of half an hour they took their leave.

To any one who loves the writings of Charles Lamb with but half my own enthusiasm, even these little particulars of an hour passed in his company will have an interest. To him who does not, they will seem dull and idle. Wreck as he certainly is, and must be, however, of what he was, I would rather have seen him for that single hour, than the hundred and one sights of London put together.

1835

JOHN HOWARD PAYNE

Born, New York City, 1792, died, Tunis, Africa, 1852. Payne was a precocious lad of good family, was sent to Union College, but gave up schooling for the stage. He appeared in New York in 1809, and in London four years later, remaining abroad as a player and playwright for nineteen years. His song, *Home, Sweet Home*, was sung in an opera, *Clari, the Maid of Milan*, at Covent Garden, 1823. Payne produced, adapted, or re-wrote some sixty plays and operas, among which *Brutus*, 1819, *Therese*, adapted from the French, 1821, and *Charles the Second*, 1824, were particularly well received. He retired from the stage in 1832, and from 1841 to 1845, and in 1851-1852 was American consul at Tunis.

HOME, SWEET HOME!

Mid pleasures and palaces though we may
roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like
home;
A charm from the sky seems to hallow us
there,

---

[6] Lamb's memory was perhaps playing him false. The stories are not in Woolman's *Journal*.

[7] William Hazlitt, English essayist and critic, 1778-1830.

Which, seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere.
Home, Home, sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home! there's no place like Home!

An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain;
Oh, give me my lowly thatched cottage again!
The birds singing gayly, that came at my call,—
Give me them,—and the peace of mind, dearer than all!
Home, Home, sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home! there's no place like Home!

How sweet 't is to sit 'neath a fond father's smile,
And the cares of a mother to soothe and beguile!
Let others delight mid new pleasures to roam,
But give me, oh, give me, the pleasures of home!
Home! Home! sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home! there's no place like Home!

To thee I'll return, overburdened with care;
The heart's dearest solace will smile on me there;
No more from that cottage again will I roam;
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.
Home! Home! sweet, sweet Home!
There's no place like Home! there's no place like Home!

1823? 1823

GEORGE POPE MORRIS

Born, Philadelphia, 1802, died, New York City, 1864. He lived in New York from boyhood. In 1823 he founded with Samuel Woodworth the *New York Mirror* and conducted it successfully for twenty years, after which he engaged in a number of other journalistic enterprises. His most successful sustained work was *Brier Cliff*, a drama of the Revolution.

WOODMAN, SPARE THAT TREE!

Woodman, spare that tree!
Touch not a single bough!
In youth it sheltered me,
And I'll protect it now.
'T was my forefather's hand
That placed it near his cot;
There, woodman, let it stand,
Thy axe shall harm it not.

That old familiar tree,
Whose glory and renown
Are spread o'er land and sea,—
And wouldst thou hew it down?
Woodman, forbear thy stroke!
Cut not its earth-bound ties;
Oh, spare that aged oak
Now towering to the skies!

When but an idle boy,
I sought its grateful shade;
In all their gushing joy
Here, too, my sisters played.
My mother kissed me here;
My father pressed my hand—
Forgive this foolish tear,
But let that old oak stand!

My heart-strings round thee cling,
Close as thy bark, old friend!
Here shall the wild-bird sing,
And still thy branches bend.
Old tree! the storm still brave!
And, woodman, leave the spot;
While I've a hand to save,
Thy axe shall harm it not.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

Born, Frederick County, Maryland, 1779, died, Washington, D. C., 1843. After graduating at St. John's College, Annapolis, Key studied law and practiced in Frederick, and in Washington, where he became district attorney. A volume of his poems was published in 1857.

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER[1]

O say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming!
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air,

---

[1] During the War of 1812 a British fleet unsuccessfully bombarded Fort McHenry, a defense of Baltimore. Key, aboard one of the British vessels as a prisoner of war, watched the battle from that point of vantage and wrote the song immediately after.

Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there;
O say, does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, now conceals, now discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream;
'T is the star-spangled banner; O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave;
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

O! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation!
Blest with victory and peace, may the heaven-rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just,
And this be our motto—*"In God is our trust."*
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

1814

RICHARD HENRY WILDE

Born, Dublin, Ireland, 1789, died, New Orleans, 1847. Coming with his parents to Augusta, Georgia, as a child, he studied and practiced law, became attorney-general for the state, served for three terms in Congress, and in 1844 was appointed professor of law in the University of Louisiana. He resided abroad from 1835 to 1840, and should be remembered as influential in the discovery and restoration of a fresco portrait of Dante at Florence.

"MY LIFE IS LIKE THE SUMMER ROSE"

My life is like the summer rose,
That opens to the morning sky,
But, ere the shades of evening close,
Is scattered on the ground—to die!
Yet on the rose's humble bed
The sweetest dews of night are shed,
As if she wept the waste to see—
But none shall weep a tear for me!

My life is like the autumn leaf
That trembles in the moon's pale ray:
Its hold is frail—its date is brief,
Restless—and soon to pass away!
Yet, ere that leaf shall fall and fade,
The parent tree will mourn its shade,
The winds bewail the leafless tree,—
But none shall breathe a sigh for me!

My life is like the prints, which feet
Have left on Tampa's desert strand;
Soon as the rising tide shall beat,
All trace will vanish from the sand;
Yet, as if grieving to efface
All vestige of the human race,
On that lone shore loud moans the sea,—
But none, alas! shall mourn for me!

c. 1815

TO THE MOCKING-BIRD

Winged mimic of the woods! thou motley fool!
Who shall thy gay buffoonery describe?
Thine ever-ready notes of ridicule
Pursue thy fellows still with jest and gibe:
Wit, sophist, songster, Yorick[1] of thy tribe,
Thou sportive satirist of Nature's school,
To thee the palm of scoffing we ascribe,
Arch-mocker and mad Abbot of Misrule![2]
For such thou art by day—but all night long
Thou pourest a soft, sweet, pensive, solemn strain,

---

[1] Jester. See *Hamlet*, V. i., 195.

[2] The chief character in the medieval English Christmas revels.

As if thou didst in this thy moonlight song
Like to the melancholy Jacques[3] complain,
Musing on falsehood, folly, vice, and wrong,
And sighing for thy motley coat again.

EDWARD COATE PINKNEY

Born, London, England, 1802, died, Baltimore, 1828. He was son of William Pinkney, United States agent and minister to Great Britain, was in the United States navy, 1816-1824, and later became professor of rhetoric and belles lettres in the University of Maryland. His best-known work is *Rodolph and Other Poems*, 1825.

A HEALTH

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon;
To whom the better elements
And kindly stars have given
A form so fair, that, like the air,
'T is less of earth than heaven.

Her every tone is music's own,
Like those of morning birds,
And something more than melody
Dwells ever in her words;
The coinage of her heart are they,
And from her lips each flows
As one may see the burdened bee
Forth issue from the rose.

Affections are as thoughts to her,
The measures of her hours;
Her feelings have the fragrancy,
The freshness of young flowers;
And lovely passions, changing oft,
So fill her, she appears
The image of themselves by turns,—
The idol of past years!

Of her bright face one glance will trace
A picture on the brain,
And of her voice in echoing hearts
A sound must long remain;
But memory, such as mine of her,
So very much endears,
When death is nigh my latest sigh
Will not be life's, but hers.

I fill this cup to one made up
Of loveliness alone,
A woman, of her gentle sex
The seeming paragon—
Her health! and would on earth there stood
Some more of such a frame,
That life might be all poetry,
And weariness a name.

1825

SAMUEL HENRY DICKSON

Born, Charleston, South Carolina, 1798, died, Philadelphia, 1872. After graduating at Yale in 1814 and receiving his degree in medicine at the University of Pennsylvania in 1819, Dr. Dickson was professor of medicine successively at the medical school at Charleston, 1824, at the University of the City of New York, 1847, and at Jefferson College, Philadelphia, 1858. He was the author of several medical works.

"I SIGH FOR THE LAND OF THE CYPRESS AND PINE"

I sigh for the land of the cypress and pine,
Where the jessamine blooms, and the gay woodbine;
Where the moss droops low from the green oak tree,—
Oh, that sun-bright land is the land for me!

The snowy flower of the orange there
Sheds its sweet fragrance through the air;
And the Indian rose delights to twine
Its branches with the laughing vine.

There the deer leaps light through the open glade,
Or hides him far in the forest shade.
When the woods resound in the dewy morn
With the clang of the merry hunter's horn.

There the humming-bird, of rainbow plume,
Hangs over the scarlet creeper's bloom;
While 'midst the leaves his varying dyes
Sparkle like half-seen fairy eyes.

There the echoes ring through the livelong day
With the mock-bird's changeful roundelay;
And at night, when the scene is calm and still,
With the moan of the plaintive whip-poor-will.

Oh! I sigh for the land of the cypress and pine,
Of the laurel, the rose, and the gay woodbine,
Where the long, gray moss decks the rugged oak tree,—
That sun-bright land is the land for me.

---

[3] A character in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*.

WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS

Born, Charleston, South Carolina, 1806, died there, 1870. After a meager schooling, Simms studied law, was admitted to the bar, but soon turned to journalism and literature. He lived for a short time in Massachusetts, but supported the South during the Civil War. He published *Lyrical and Other Poems,* 1827; *Atalantis,* poem, 1832; *The Yemassee,* 1835; *Areytos, or Songs and Ballads of the South,* 1846. His writings include more than eighty titles,—poetry, fiction, biography, drama,—exclusive of a mass of journalistic work.

THE SWAMP FOX[1]

We follow where the Swamp Fox guides,
His friends and merry men are we;
And when the troop of Tarleton[2] rides,
We burrow in the cypress tree.
The turfy hammock[3] is our bed,
Our home is in the red deer's den,
Our roof, the tree-top overhead,
For we are wild and hunted men.

We fly by day and shun its light,
But, prompt to strike the sudden blow,
We mount and start with early night,
And through the forest track our foe.
And soon he hears our chargers leap,
The flashing saber blinds his eyes,
And ere he drives away his sleep,
And rushes from his camp, he dies.

Free bridle-bit, good gallant steed,
That will not ask a kind caress
To swim the Santee at our need,
When on his heels the foemen press—
The true heart and the ready hand,
The spirit stubborn to be free,
The twisted bore, the smiting brand—
And we are Marion's men, you see.

Now light the fire and cook the meal,
The last perhaps that we shall taste;
I hear the Swamp Fox round us steal,
And that's a sign we move in haste.
He whistles to the scouts, and hark!
You hear his order calm and low.
Come, wave your torch across the dark,
And let us see the boys that go.

We may not see their forms again,
God help 'em, should they find the strife!
For they are strong and fearless men,
And make no coward terms for life;
They'll fight as long as Marion bids,
And when he speaks the word to shy,
Then, not till then, they turn their steeds,
Through thickening shade and swamp to fly.

Now stir the fire and lie at ease—
The scouts are gone, and on the brush
I see the Colonel bend his knees,
To take his slumbers too. But hush!
He's praying, comrades; 'tis not strange;
The man that's fighting day by day
May well, when night comes, take a change,
And down upon his knees to pray.

Break up that hoe-cake, boys, and hand
The sly and silent jug that's there;
I love not it should idly stand
When Marion's men have need of cheer.
'Tis seldom that our luck affords
A stuff like this we just have quaffed,
And dry potatoes on our boards
May always call for such a draught.

Now pile the brush and roll the log;
Hard pillow, but a soldier's head
That's half the time in brake and bog
Must never think of softer bed.
The owl is hooting to the night,
The cooter[4] crawling o'er the bank,
And in that pond the flashing light
Tells where the alligator sank.

What! 'tis the signal! start so soon,
And through the Santee swamp so deep,
Without the aid of friendly moon,
And we, Heaven help us! half asleep!
But courage, comrades! Marion leads,
The Swamp Fox takes us out tonight;
So clear your swords and spur your steeds,
There's goodly chance, I think, of fight.

We follow where the Swamp Fox guides,
We leave the swamp and cypress tree,
Our spurs are in our coursers' sides,
And ready for the strife are we.
The Tory camp is now in sight,
And there he cowers within his den;
He hears our shouts, he dreads the fight,
He fears, and flies from Marion's men.

1832

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[1] The nickname given to General Francis Marion, the noted South Carolina partisan, or independent, leader, of the Revolutionary War. With but a handful of men (he seldom had over seventy) he performed valiant and valuable service. He was said to be as courteous and honest as he was brave. See Fiske, *The American Revolution,* ii., 183. Cf. Bryant's *The Song of Marion's Men.*

[2] A noted British cavalry officer.

[3] hummock, a low elevation especially in swampy ground.

[4] terrapin.

From THE YEMASSEE[1]

CHAPTER XXV

The pain of death is nothing. To the chief,
The forest warrior, it is good to die!
To die as he has lived, battling and hoarse,
Shouting a song of triumph. But to live
Under such doom as this, were far beyond
Even his stoic, cold philosophy.

It was a gloomy amphitheater in the deep forests to which the assembled multitude bore the unfortunate Occonestoga. The whole scene was unique in that solemn grandeur, that somber hue, that deep spiritual repose, in which the human imagination delights to invest the region which has been rendered remarkable for the deed of punishment or crime. A small swamp or morass hung upon one side of the wood, from the rank bosom of which, in numberless millions, the flickering firefly perpetually darted upwards, giving a brilliance and animation to the spot, which at that moment no assemblage of light or life could possibly enliven. The ancient oak, a bearded Druid, was there to contribute to the due solemnity of all associations—the green but gloomy cedar, the ghostly cypress, and here and there, the overgrown pine,—all rose up in their primitive strength, and with an undergrowth around them of shrub and flower that scarcely at any time, in that sheltered and congenial habitation, had found it necessary to shrink from winter. In the center of the area thus invested rose a high and venerable mound, the tumulus of many preceding ages, from the washed sides of which might now and then be seen protruding the bleached bones of some ancient warrior or sage. A circle of trees at a little distance hedged it in, made secure and sacred by the performance there of many of their religious rites and offices,—themselves, as they bore the broad arrow of the Yemassee, being free from all danger of overthrow or desecration by Indian hands.

Amid the confused cries of the multitude, they bore the captive to the foot of the tumulus, and bound him backward, half reclining upon a tree. An hundred warriors stood around, armed according to the manner of the nation, each with a tomahawk and knife and bow. They stood up as for battle, but spectators simply, and took no part in a proceeding which belonged entirely to the priesthood. In a wider and denser circle gathered hundreds more—not the warriors, but the people—the old, the young, the women and the children, all fiercely excited, and anxious to see a ceremony so awfully exciting to an Indian imagination; involving as it did not only the perpetual loss of human caste and national consideration, but the eternal doom, the degradation, the denial of and the exile from their simple forest heaven. Interspersed with this latter crowd, seemingly at regular intervals, and with an allotted labor assigned them, came a number of old women, not unmeet representatives, individually, for either of the weird sisters of the Scottish thane,

So withered and so wild in their attire—[2]

and regarding their cries and actions, of whom we may safely affirm that they looked like anything but inhabitants of earth! In their hands they bore, each of them, a flaming torch of the rich and gummy pine; and these they waved over the heads of the multitude in a thousand various evolutions, accompanying each movement with a fearful cry, which at regular periods was chorused by the assembled mass. A bugle, a native instrument of sound, five feet or more in length hollowed out from the commonest timber—the cracks and breaks of which were carefully sealed up with the resinous gum oozing from their burning torches, and which to this day, borrowed from the natives, our negroes employ on the Southern waters with a peculiar compass and variety of note—was carried by one of the party, and gave forth at intervals timed with much regularity, a long protracted, single blast, adding greatly to the wild and picturesque character of the spectacle. At the articulation of these sounds, the circles continued to contract, though slowly; until at length but a brief space lay between the armed warriors, the crowd, and the unhappy victim.

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[1] Simms has been called the Cooper of the South, and he has been said, perhaps with more partisanship than discrimination, to portray Indian life and the character of woman more truly than Cooper. *The Yemassee,* which is considered the best of his novels, describes South Carolina in 1715 when it was still inhabited by the great tribe of the Yemassee Indians. The hero of the story is Sanutee, one of the most revered and most beloved chiefs of the tribe. His wisdom has foreseen the final victory of the whites and the doom of the Indians. Stung into action by the fact that his son Occonestoga has been given the strong drink of the English, he raises a rebellion intended to exterminate the settlers. A few of the other chiefs, who have been tempted by gifts to side with the English, suffer the punishment of having the yellow arrow, the symbol of their common ancestry, cut and burned from the arm and breast, and of being sent forth exiles from the tribe forever,—not alone on earth, but in the hereafter. Occonestoga, the son of Sanutee, has also, while intoxicated, taken sides with the English. He has been captured and is to suffer the doom of exile. Matiwan, his mother, has believed in him to the last, but she is loyal to her husband Sanutee, the accuser, as to her son, the accused.

[2] *Macbeth,* I. iii. 40.

The night grew dark of a sudden, and the sky was obscured by one of the brief tempests that usually usher in the summer, and mark the transition, in the South, of one season to another. A wild gust rushed along the wood. The leaves were whirled over the heads of the assemblage, and the trees bent downwards until they cracked and groaned again beneath the wind. A feeling of natural superstition crossed the minds of the multitude, as the hurricane, though common enough in that region, passed hurriedly along; and a spontaneous and universal voice of chanted prayer rose from the multitude, in their own wild and emphatic language, to the evil deity whose presence they beheld in its progress:

Thy wing, Opitchi-Manneyto,[3]
It o'erthrows the tall trees—
Thy breath, Opitchi-Manneyto,
Makes the waters tremble—
Thou art in the hurricane,
When the wigwam tumbles—
Thou art in the arrow-fire,
When the pine is shivered—
But upon the Yemassee,
Be thy coming gentle—
Are they not thy well-beloved?
Bring they not a slave to thee?
Look! the slave is bound for thee,
'Tis the Yemassee that brings him.
Pass, Opitchi-Manneyto—
Pass, black spirit, pass from us—
Be thy passage gentle.

And as the uncouth strain rose at the conclusion into a diapason of unanimous and contending voices, of old and young, male and female, the brief summer tempest had gone by. A shout of self-gratulation, joined with warm acknowledgments, testified the popular sense and confidence in that especial Providence, which even the most barbarous nations claim as forever working in their behalf.

At this moment, surrounded by the chiefs, and preceded by the great prophet or high-priest, Enoree-Mattee, came Sanutee, the well-beloved of the Yemassee, to preside over the destinies of his son. There was a due and becoming solemnity, but nothing of the peculiar feelings of the father, visible in his countenance. Blocks of wood were placed around as seats for the chiefs; but Sanutee and the prophet threw themselves, with more of imposing veneration in the proceeding, upon the edge of the tumulus, just where an overcharged spot, bulging out with the crowding bones of its inmates, had formed an elevation answering the purpose of couch or seat. They sat directly looking upon the prisoner; who reclined, bound securely upon his back to a decapitated tree, at a little distance before them. A signal having been given, the women ceased their clamors; and approaching him they waved their torches so closely above his head as to make all his features distinctly visible to the now watchful and silent multitude. He bore the examination with stern, unmoved features, which the sculptor in brass or marble might have been glad to transfer to his statue in the block. While the torches waved, one of the women now cried aloud, in a barbarous chant, above him:—

Is not this a Yemassee?
Wherefore is he bound thus—
Wherefore with the broad arrow
On his right arm growing?
Wherefore is he bound thus?
Is not this a Yemassee?

A second woman now approached him, waving her torch in like manner, seeming closely to inspect his features, and actually passing her fingers over the emblem upon his shoulder, as if to ascertain more certainly the truth of the image. Having done this, she turned about to the crowd, and in the same barbarous sort of strain with the preceding, replied as follows:—

It is not the Yemassee,
But a dog that runs away.
From his right arm take the arrow,
He is not the Yemassee.

As these words were uttered, the crowd of women and children around cried out for the execution of the judgment thus given; and once again flamed the torches wildly, and the shoutings were general among the multitude. When they had subsided, a huge Indian came forward and sternly confronted the prisoner. This man was Malatchie, the executioner; and he looked the horrid trade which he professed. His garments were stained and smeared with blood, and covered with scalps, which, connected together by slight strings, formed a loose robe over his shoulders. In one hand he carried a torch, in the other a knife. He came forward, under the instructions of Enoree-Mattee the prophet, to claim the slave of Opitchi-Manneyto,—that is, in our language, the slave of hell. This he did in the following strain:—

'Tis Opitchi-Manneyto
In Malatchie's ear that cries:—
"This is not the Yemassee,—

---

[3] Manneyto is spirit, and Opitchi Manneyto the evil spirit.

And the woman's word is true,—
He's a dog that should be mine:
I have hunted for him long.
From his master he had run,
With the stranger made his home;
Now I have him, he is mine:
Hear Opitchi-Manneyto.''

And as the besmeared and malignant executioner howled his fierce demand in the very ears of his victim, he hurled the knife which he carried, upwards with such dexterity into the air, that it rested point downward and sticking fast, on its descent, into the tree and just above the head of the doomed Occonestoga. With his hand, the next instant, he laid a resolute gripe upon the shoulder of the victim, as if to confirm and strengthen his claim by actual possession; while at the same time, with a sort of malignant pleasure, he thrust his besmeared and distorted visage close into the face of his prisoner. Writhing against the ligaments which bound him fast, Occonestoga strove to turn his head aside from the disgusting and obtrusive presence; and the desperation of his effort, but that he had been too carefully secured, might have resulted in the release of some of his limbs; for the breast heaved and labored, and every muscle of his arms and legs was wrought, by his severe action, into so many ropes,—hard, full, and indicative of prodigious strength.

There was one person in that crowd who sympathized with the victim. This was Hiwassee, the maiden in whose ears he had uttered a word, which in her thoughtless scream and subsequent declaration of the event, when she had identified him, had been the occasion of his captivity. Something of self-reproach for her share in his misfortune, and an old feeling of regard for Occonestoga,—who had once been a favorite with the young of both sexes among his people,—was at work in her bosom; and turning to Echotee, her newly accepted lover, as soon as the demand of Malatchie had been heard, she prayed him to resist the demand.

In such cases, all that a warrior had to do was simply to join issue upon the claim, and the popular will then determined the question. Echotee could not resist an application so put to him, and by one who had just listened to a prayer of his own so all-important to his own happiness; and being himself a noble youth—one who had been a rival of the captive in his better days,—a feeling of generosity combined with the request of Hiwassee, and he boldly leaped forward. Seizing the knife of Malatchie, which stuck in the tree, he drew it forth and threw it upon the ground; thus removing the sign of property which the executioner had put up in behalf of the evil deity.

"Occonestoga is the brave of the Yemassee," exclaimed the young Echotee, while the eyes of the captive looked what his lips could not have said. "Occonestoga is a brave of Yemassee: he is no dog of Malatchie. Wherefore is the cord upon the limbs of a free warrior? Is not Occonestoga a free warrior of Yemassee? The eyes of Echotee have looked upon a warrior like Occonestoga when he took many scalps. Did not Occonestoga lead the Yemassee against the Savannahs? The eyes of Echotee saw him slay the red-eyed Suwannee, the great chief of the Savannahs. Did not Occonestoga go on the war-path with our young braves against the Edistoes,—the brown foxes that came out of the swamp? The eyes of Echotee beheld him. Occonestoga is a brave, and a hunter of Yemassee: he is not the dog of Melatchie. He knows not fear. He hath an arrow with wings, and the panther he runs down in the chase. His tread is the tread of a sly serpent, that comes so that he hears him not upon the track of the red deer feeding down in the valley. Echotee knows the warrior; Echotee knows the hunter; he knows Occonestoga,—but he knows no dog of Opitchi-Manneyto."

"He hath drunk of the poison drink of the palefaces; his feet are gone from the good path of the Yemassee; he would sell his people to the English for a painted bird. He is the slave of Opitchi-Manneyto," cried Malatchie in reply. Echotee was not satisfied to yield the point so soon, and he responded accordingly.

"It is true; the feet of the young warrior have gone away from the good paths of the Yemassee; but I see not the weakness of the chief when my eye looks back upon the great deeds of the warrior. I see nothing but the shrinking body of Suwannee under the knee—under the knife of the Yemassee. I hear nothing but the war-whoop of the Yemassee, when he broke through the camp of the brown foxes, and scalped them where they skulked in the swamp. I see this Yemassee strike the foe and take the scalp, and I know Occonestoga,—Occonestoga, the son of the well-beloved, the great chief of the Yemassee."

"It is good; Occonestoga has thanks for Echotee; Echotee is a brave warrior!" murmured the captive to his champion, in tones of melancholy acknowledgment. The current of public feeling began to set somewhat in behalf of the victim, and an occasional whisper to that effect might be heard here and there among the multitude. Even Malatchie himself looked for a moment as if he thought it not improbable that he might be defrauded of his prey; and while a free shout from many attested the compliment which all were willing to pay to Echotee for his magnanimous defense of one who had once been a rival—and not always successful—in the general estimation, the executioner turned to the prophet and to Sanutee, as if doubtful whether or not to proceed farther in his claim. But all doubt was soon quieted, as the stern father rose before the assembly. Every sound was stilled in expectation of his words on this so momentous an occasion to himself. They waited not long. The old man had tasked all the energies of the patriot, not less than of the stoic; and having once determined upon the necessity of the sacrifice, he had no hesitating fears or scruples palsying his determination. He seemed not to regard the imploring glance of his son, seen and felt by all besides in the assembly, but with a voice entirely unaffected by the circumstances of his position, he spoke forth the doom of the victim in confirmation with that originally expressed.

"Echotee has spoken like a brave warrior with a tongue of truth and a soul that has birth with the sun. But he speaks out of his own heart, and does not speak to the heart of the traitor. The Yemassee will all say for Echotee, but who can say for Occonestoga when Sanutee himself is silent? Does the Yemassee speak with a double tongue? Did not the Yemassee promise Occonestoga to Opitchi-Manneyto with the other chiefs? Where are they? They are gone into the swamp, where the sun shines not, and the eyes of Opitchi-Manneyto are upon them. He knows them for his slaves. The arrow is gone from their shoulders and the Yemassee knows them no longer. Shall the dog escape who led the way to the English—who brought the poison drink to the chiefs, which made them dogs to the English and slaves to Opitchi-Manneyto? Shall he escape the doom the Yemassee hath put upon them? Sanutee speaks the voice of the Manneyto. Occonestoga is a dog, who would sell his father—who would make our women to carry water for the palefaces. He is not the son of Sanutee—Sanutee knows him no more. Look, Yemassees,—the Well-beloved has spoken!"

He paused, and turning away, sank down silently upon the little bank on which he had before rested; while Malatchie, without further opposition,—for the renunciation of his own son, by one so highly esteemed as Sanutee, was conclusive against the youth,—advanced to execute the terrible judgment upon his victim.

"O father, chief, Sanutee the Well-beloved!" was the cry that now, for the first time, burst convulsively from the lips of the prisoner; "hear me, father,—Occonestoga will go on the warpath with thee and with the Yemassee against the Edisto, against the Spaniard; hear, Sanutee,—he will go with thee against the English." But the old man bent not, yielded not, and the crowd gathered nigher in the intensity of their interest.

"Wilt thou have no ear, Sanutee? It is Occonestoga, it is the son of Matiwan, that speaks to thee." Sanutee's head sank as the reference was made to Matiwan, but he showed no other sign of emotion. He moved not, he spoke not; and bitterly and hopelessly the youth exclaimed:—

"Oh! thou art colder than the stone house of the adder, and deafer than his ears. Father, Sanutee, wherefore wilt thou lose me, even as the tree its leaf, when the storm smites it in summer? Save me, my father."

And his head sank in despair as he beheld the unchanging look of stern resolve with which the unbending sire regarded him. For a moment he was unmanned; until a loud shout of derision from the crowd, as they beheld the show of his weakness, came to the support of his pride. The Indian shrinks from humiliation, where he would not shrink from death; and as the shout reached his ears, he shouted back his defiance, raised his head loftily in air, and with the most perfect composure commenced singing his song of death,—the song of many victories.

"Wherefore sings he his death-song?" was the cry from many voices: "he is not to die!"

"Thou art the slave of Opitchi-Manneyto," cried Malatchie to the captive; "thou shalt sing no lie of thy victories in the ear of Yemassee. The slave of Opitchi-Manneyto has no triumph"; and the words of the song were effectually drowned, if not silenced in the tremendous clamor which they raised about him.

It was then that Malatchie claimed his victim. The doom had been already given, but the ceremony of expatriation and outlawry was yet to follow, and under the direction of the prophet, the various castes and classes of the nation prepared to take a final leave of one who could no longer be known among them. First of all came a band of young marriageable women, who, wheeling in a circle three times about him, sang together a wild apostrophe containing a bitter farewell, which nothing in our language could perfectly embody:—

> Go; thou hast no wife in Yemassee—thou hast given no lodge to the daughter of Yemassee—thou hast slain no meat for thy children. Thou hast no name—the women of Yemassee know thee no more. They know thee no more.

And the final sentence was reverberated from the entire assembly:—

> They know thee no more—they know thee no more.

Then came a number of the ancient men, the patriarchs of the nation, who surrounded him in circular mazes three several times, singing as they did so a hymn of like import:—

> Go: thou sittest not in the council of Yemassee—thou shalt not speak wisdom to the boy that comes. Thou hast no name in Yemassee—the fathers of Yemassee, they know thee no more.

And again the whole assembly cried out, as with one voice:—

> They know thee no more—they know thee no more.

These were followed by the young warriors, his old associates, who now in a solemn band approached him to go through a like performance. His eyes were shut as they came, his blood was chilled in his heart, and the articulated farewell of their wild chant failed seemingly to reach his ear. Nothing but the last sentence he heard:—

Thou that wast a brother,
Thou art nothing now—
The young warriors of Yemassee,
They know thee no more.

And the crowd cried with them:—

They know thee no more.

"Is no hatchet sharp for Occonestoga?" moaned forth the suffering savage.

But his trials were only then begun. Enoree-Mattee now approached him with the words with which, as the representative of the good Manneyto, he renounced him—with which he denied him access to the Indian heaven, and left him a slave and an outcast, a miserable wanderer amid the shadows and the swamps, and liable to all the dooms and terrors which come with the service of Opitchi-Manneyto.

Thou wast a child of Manneyto—

sung the high priest in a solemn chant, and with a deep-toned voice that thrilled strangely amid the silence of the scene.

Thou wast a child of Manneyto—
He gave thee arrows and an eye;
Thou wast the strong son of Manneyto—
He gave thee feathers and a wing;
Thou wast a young brave of Manneyto—
He gave thee scalps and a war-song:
But he knows thee no more—he knows thee no more.

And the clustering multitude again gave back the last line in wild chorus. The prophet continued his chant:—

That Opitchi-Manneyto!
He commands thee for his slave—
And the Yemassee must hear him,
Hear, and give thee for his slave:
They will take from thee the arrow,
The broad arrow of thy people;
Thou shalt see no blessed valley,
Where the plum-groves always bloom;
Thou shalt hear no song of valor
From the ancient Yemassee;
Father, mother, name, and people,
Thou shalt lose with that broad arrow.
Thou art lost to the Manneyto—
He knows thee no more, he knows thee no more.

The despair of hell was in the face of the victim, and he howled forth in a cry of agony—that for a moment silenced the wild chorus of the crowd around—the terrible consciousness in his mind of that privation which the doom entailed upon him. Every feature was convulsed with emotion; and the terrors of Opitchi-Manneyto's dominion seemed already in strong exercise upon the muscles of his heart, when Sanutee, the father, silently approached him, and with a pause of a few moments, stood gazing upon the son from whom he was to be separated eternally—whom not even the uniting, the restoring, hand of death could possibly restore to him. And he, his once noble son,—the pride of his heart, the gleam of his hope, the triumphant warrior, who was even to increase his own glory, and transmit the endearing title of Well-beloved, which the Yemassee had given him, to a succeeding generation—he was to be lost forever! These promises were all blasted; and the father was now present to yield him up eternally—to deny him—to forfeit him, in fearful penalty, to the nation whose genius he had wronged, and whose rights he had violated. The old man stood for a moment,—rather, we may suppose, for the recovery of his resolution, than with any desire for the contemplation of the pitiable form before him. The pride of the youth came back to him—the pride of the strong mind in its desolation—as his eye caught the inflexible gaze of his unswerving father; and he exclaimed bitterly and loud:—

"Wherefore art thou come? Thou hast been my foe, not my father! Away—I would not behold thee!" and he closed his eyes after the speech, as if to relieve himself from a disgusting presence.

"Thou hast said well, Occonestoga: Sanutee is thy foe; he is not thy father. To say this in thy ears has he come. Look on him, Occonestoga—look up and hear thy doom. The young and the old of the Yemassee, the warrior and the chief—they have all denied thee—all given thee up to Opitchi-Manneyto! Occonestoga is no name for the Yemassee. The Yemassee gives it to his dog. The prophet of Manneyto has forgotten thee; thou art unknown to those who were thy people. And I, thy father—with this speech, I yield thee to Opitchi-Manneyto. Sanutee is no longer thy father—thy father knows thee no more."

And once more came to the ears of the victim that melancholy chorus of the multitude:

—He knows thee no more, he knows thee no more.

Sanutee turned quickly away as he had spoken; and as if he suffered more than he was willing to show, the old man rapidly hastened to the little mound where he had been previously sitting, his eyes averted from the further spectacle. Occonestoga, goaded to madness by these several incidents, shrieked forth the bitterest execrations, until Enoree-Mattee, preceding Malatchie, again approached. Having given some directions in an under-tone to the latter, he retired, leaving the executioner alone with his victim. Malatchie then, while all was silence in the crowd,—a thick silence, in which even respiration seemed to be suspended,—proceeded to his duty; and lifting the feet of Occonestoga carefully from the ground, he placed a log under them; then addressing him, as he again bared his knife, which he stuck in the tree above his head, he sung:—

I take from thee the earth of Yemassee—
I take from thee the water of Yemassee—
I take from thee the arrow of Yemassee—
Thou art no longer a Yemassee—
The Yemassee knows thee no more.

"The Yemassee knows thee no more," cried the multitude; and their universal shout was deafening upon the ear. Occonestoga said no word now; he could offer no resistance to the unnerving hands of Malatchie, who now bared the arm more completely of its covering. But his limbs were convulsed with the spasms of that dreadful terror of the future which was racking and raging in every pulse of his heart. He had full faith in the superstitions of his people. His terrors acknowledged the full horrors of their doom. A despairing agony, which no language could describe, had possession of his soul. Meanwhile the silence of all indicated the general anxiety; and Malatchie prepared to seize the knife and perform the operation, when a confused murmur arose from the crowd around: the mass gave way and parted; and rushing wildly into the area came Matiwan, his mother—the long black hair streaming—the features, an astonishing likeness to his own, convulsed like his; and her action that of one reckless of all things in the way of the forward progress she was making to the person of her child. She cried aloud as she came, with a voice that rang like a sudden death-bell through the ring:—

"Would you keep the mother from her boy, and he to be lost to her for ever? Shall she have no parting with the young brave she bore in her bosom? Away, keep me not back—I will look upon, I will love him. He shall have the blessing of Matiwan, though the Yemassee and the Manneyto curse."

The victim heard; and a momentary renovation of mental life, perhaps a renovation of hope, spoke out in the simple exclamation which fell from his lips:—

"Oh Matiwan—Oh mother!"

She rushed towards the spot where she heard his appeal; and thrusting the executioner aside, threw her arms desperately about his neck.

"Touch him not, Matiwan," was the general cry from the crowd. "Touch him not, Matiwan: Manneyto knows him no more."

"But Matiwan knows him; the mother knows her child, though the Manneyto denies him. O boy—O boy, boy, boy!" And she sobbed like an infant on his neck.

"Thou art come, Matiwan, thou art come; but wherefore? To curse like the father—to curse like the Manneyto?" mournfully said the captive.

"No, no, no! Not to curse—not to curse! When did mother curse the child she bore? Not to curse but to bless thee. To bless thee and forgive."

"Tear her away," cried the prophet; "let Opitchi-Manneyto have his slave."

"Tear her away, Malatchie," cried the crowd, now impatient for the execution. Malatchie approached.

"Not yet—not yet," appealed the woman. "Shall not the mother say farewell to the child she shall see no more?" and she waved Malatchie back, and in the next instant drew hastily from the drapery of her dress a small hatchet, which she had there carefully concealed.

"What wouldst thou do, Matiwan?" asked Occonestoga, as his eye caught the glare of the weapon.

"Save thee, my boy—save thee for thy mother, Occonestoga—save thee for the happy valley."

"Wouldst thou slay me, mother? Wouldst strike the heart of thy son?" he asked, with a something of reluctance to receive death from the hands of a parent.

"I strike thee but to save thee, my son; since they cannot take the totem from thee after the life is gone. Turn away from me thy head; let me not look upon thine eyes as I strike, lest my hands grow weak and tremble. Turn thine eyes away—I will not lose thee."

His eyes closed; and the fatal instrument, lifted above her head, was now visible in the sight of all. The executioner rushed forward to interpose, but he came too late. The tomahawk was driven deep into the skull, and but a single sentence from his lips preceded the final insensibility of the victim.

"It is good, Matiwan, it is good; thou hast saved me—the death is in my heart." And back he sank as he spoke; while a shriek of mingled joy and horror from the lips of the mother announced the success of her effort to defeat the doom, the most dreadful in the imagination of the Yemassee.

"He is not lost—he is not lost! They may not take the child from his mother. They may not keep him from the valley of Manneyto. He is free—he is free!" And she fell back in a deep swoon into the arms of Sanutee, who by this time had approached. She had defrauded Opitchi-Manneyto of his victim, for they may not remove the badge of the nation from any but the living victim.

1835

EDGAR ALLAN POE[1]

Born, Boston, 1809, died, Baltimore, 1849. Poe's parents were actors. They died in 1811, when he was adopted by John Allan, of Richmond, Virginia. He had good school opportunities in Richmond and in England, and afterwards at the University of Virginia. He served two years in the United States Army, was appointed to West Point, dismissed, and after 1831 lived by journalism. He became editor of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, 1835, and from then until 1845 was editor or associate editor of *The Gentleman's Magazine*, *Graham's Magazine*, and *The Broadway Journal*, to which in succession he contributed his tales, poems, and criticisms. Important titles in Poe's works are *Tamerlane and Other Poems*, 1827; *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*, 1839; *The Raven and Other Poems*, 1845.

TO HELEN[2]

Helen, thy beauty is to me
  Like those Nicæan[3] barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
  The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
  To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
  Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs, have brought me home
  To the glory that was Greece
  And the grandeur that was Rome.[4]

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
  How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
  Ah, Psyche,[5] from the regions which
  Are Holy Land!

1823? 1831

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[1] The reading of American verse in chronological order from the beginning makes strongly impressive the fact that Poe is the first American poet whose work needs no apology. In melody, imagery, and the haunting spell laid on the emotions, Poe's verse offers more than adequate compensation for its comparative lack of substance. By it, one measure, at least, of our previous and subsequent poetry, may be taken.

[2] The poem was written, Poe says, "to the first purely ideal love of my soul—to Helen Stannard . . . " See Harrison's *Life and Letters of Poe*, ii. 294.

[3] Poe's meaning is doubtful, since no geographical name of the ancient world would give rise to the word. Perhaps Poe chose the word for its musical sound. He should be read aloud.

[4] It is concerning an equally famous expression in Keats that Kipling in *Wireless* says, "Remember that in all the millions permitted there are no more than five—five little lines of which one can say: 'These are the Vision. The rest is only poetry.' "

[5] The Greek word for soul, often, as here, personified.

ISRAFEL

And the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures.—KORAN.[6]

In Heaven a spirit doth dwell
Whose heart-strings are a lute;
None sing so wildly well
As the angel Israfel,
And the giddy stars (so legends tell),
Ceasing their hymns[7] attend the spell
Of his voice, all mute.

Tottering above
In her highest noon,
The enamoured moon
Blushes with love,
While, to listen, the red levin
(With the rapid Pleiads, even,
Which were seven)
Pauses in Heaven.

And they say (the starry choir[7]
And the other listening things)
That Israfeli's fire
Is owing to that lyre
By which he sits and sings,
The trembling living wire
Of those unusual strings.

But the skies that angel trod,[8]
Where deep thoughts are a duty,
Where Love's a grown-up God,
Where the Houri glances are
Imbued with all the beauty
Which we worship in a star.

Therefore thou art not wrong,
Israfeli, who despisest
An unimpassioned song;
To thee the laurels belong,
Best bard, because the wisest:
Merrily live, and long!

The ecstasies above
With thy burning measures suit:
Thy grief, thy joy, thy hate, thy love,
With the fervor of thy lute:
Well may the stars be mute!

Yes, Heaven is thine; but this
Is a world of sweets and sours;
Our flowers are merely—flowers,
And the shadow of thy perfect bliss
Is the sunshine of ours.

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

1831

THE CITY IN THE SEA

Lo! Death has reared himself a throne
In a strange city lying alone
Far down within the dim West,
Where the good and the bad and the worst and the best
Have gone to their eternal rest.
There shrines and palaces and towers
(Time-eaten towers that tremble not)
Resemble nothing that is ours.
Around, by lifting winds forgot,
Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.

No rays from the holy heaven come down
On the long night-time of that town;
But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently,
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free:
Up domes, up spires, up kingly halls,
Up fanes, up Babylon-like walls,
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers,
Up many and many a marvelous shrine
Whose wreathed friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

Resignedly beneath the sky
The melancholy waters lie.
So blend the turrets and shadows there
That all seem pendulous in air,
While from a proud tower in the town
Death looks gigantically down.

There open fanes and gaping graves
Yawn level with the luminous waves;
But not the riches there that lie
In each idol's diamond eye,—
Not the gayly-jeweled dead,
Tempt the waters from their bed;
For no ripples curl, alas,
Along that wilderness of glass;
No swellings tell that winds may be
Upon some far-off happier sea;

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[6] The motto comes, through Moore's *Lallah Rookh*, from Sale's *Introduction to the Koran*. It is inexact, for Poe added the words "whose heartstrings are a lute."

[7] According to an ancient theory, the fixed stars were set in a crystalline sphere. The planets were also thus set, each in its sphere. These, moving on one another, made music that might be heard by celestial beings.

[8] "But that angel trod skies where," etc.

No heavings hint that winds have been
On seas less hideously serene!

But lo, a stir is in the air!
The wave—there is a movement there!
As if the towers had thrust aside,
In slightly sinking, the dull tide;
As if their tops had feebly given
A void within the filmy Heaven!
The waves have now a redder glow,
The hours are breathing faint and low;
And when, amid no earthly moans,
Down, down that town shall settle hence,
Hell, rising from a thousand thrones,
Shall do it reverence.

1831

THE SLEEPER

At midnight, in the month of June,
I stand beneath the mystic moon.
An opiate vapor, dewy, dim,
Exhales from out her golden rim,
And, softly dripping, drop by drop,
Upon the quiet mountain-top,
Steals drowsily and musically
Into the universal valley.
The rosemary nods upon the grave;
The lily lolls upon the wave;
Wrapping the fog about its breast,
The ruin molders into rest;
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not, for the world, awake.
All beauty sleeps!—and lo! where lies
Irene, with her destinies!

O lady bright! can it be right,
This window open to the night?
The wanton airs, from the tree-top,
Laughingly through the lattice drop;
The bodiless airs, a wizard rout,
Flit through thy chamber in and out,
And wave the curtain canopy
So fitfully, so fearfully,
Above the closed and fringed lid
'Neath which thy slumb'ring soul lies hid,
That, o'er the floor and down the wall,
Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall.
O lady dear, hast thou no fear?
Why and what art thou dreaming here?
Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas,
A wonder to these garden trees!
Strange is thy pallor: strange thy dress:
Strange, above all, thy length of tress,
And this all solemn silentness!

The lady sleeps. Oh, may her sleep,
Which is enduring, so be deep!
Heaven have her in its sacred keep!
This chamber changed for one more holy,
This bed for one more melancholy,
I pray to God that she may lie
Forever with unopened eye,
While the pale sheeted ghosts go by.

My love, she sleeps. Oh, may her sleep,
As it is lasting, so be deep!
Soft may the worms about her creep!
Far in the forest, dim and old,
For her may some tall vault unfold:
Some vault that oft hath flung its black
And winged panels fluttering back,
Triumphant, o'er the crested palls
Of her grand family funerals:
Some sepulcher, remote, alone,
Against whose portal she hath thrown,
In childhood many an idle stone:
Some tomb from out whose sounding door
She ne'er shall force an echo more,
Thrilling to think, poor child of sin,
It was the dead who groaned within!

1831, 1845 1831, 1845

THE COLISEUM[1]

Type of the antique Rome! Rich reliquary
Of lofty contemplation left to Time
By buried centuries of pomp and power!
At length—at length—after so many days
Of weary pilgrimage and burning thirst,
(Thirst for the springs of lore that in thee lie)
I kneel, an altered and an humble man,
Amid thy shadows, and so drink within
My very soul thy grandeur, gloom, and glory.

Vastness, and Age, and Memories of Eld!
Silence, and Desolation, and dim Night!
I feel ye now, I feel ye in your strength,
O spells more sure than e'er Judæan king
Taught in the gardens of Gethsemane!
O charms more potent than the rapt Chaldee[2]
Ever drew down from out the quiet stars!

Here, where a hero fell, a column falls;
Here, where the mimic eagle glared in gold,
A midnight vigil holds the swarthy bat;
Here, where the dames of Rome their gilded hair
Waved to the wind, now wave the reed and thistle;

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[1] Poe never visited Rome. The poem may have been suggested by Byron's well-known lines:

"While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall";
Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, iv., 145.

[2] The Chaldeans were famous as astrologers.

Here, where on golden throne the monarch lolled,
Glides, specter-like, unto his marble home,
Lit by the wan light of the horned moon,
The swift and silent lizard of the stones.

But stay! these walls, these ivy-clad arcades,
These moldering plinths, these sad and blackened shafts,
These vague entablatures, this crumbling frieze,
These shattered cornices, this wreck, this ruin,
These stones—alas! these gray stones—are they all,
All of the famed and the colossal left
By the corrosive Hours to Fate and me?

"Not all"—the Echoes answer me—"not all!
Prophetic sounds and loud, arise forever
From us, and from all Ruin, unto the wise,
As melody from Memnon[3] to the Sun.
We rule the hearts of mightiest men—we rule
With a despotic sway all giant minds.
We are not impotent, we pallid stones:
Not all our power is gone, not all our fame,
Not all the magic of our high renown,
Not all the wonder that encircles us,
Not all the mysteries that in us lie,
Not all the memories that hang upon
And cling around about us as a garment,
Clothing us in a robe of more than glory."
1833 1833

TO ONE IN PARADISE[1]

Thou wast all that to me, love,
For which my soul did pine:
A green isle in the sea, love,
A fountain and a shrine
All wreathed with fairy fruits and flowers,
And all the flowers were mine.

Ah, dream too bright to last!
Ah, starry Hope, that didst arise
But to be overcast!
A voice from out the Future cries,
"On! on!"—but o'er the Past
(Dim gulf!) my spirit hovering lies
Mute, motionless, aghast.

For, alas! alas! with me
The light of Life is o'er!
No more—no more—no more—
(Such language holds the solemn sea
To the sands upon the shore)
Shall bloom the thunder-blasted tree,
Or the stricken eagle soar.

And all my days are trances,
And all my nightly dreams
Are where thy gray eye glances,
And where thy footstep gleams—
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.
1834, 1845

TO FRANCES S. OSGOOD[2]

Thou wouldst be loved?—then let thy heart
From its present pathway part not:
Being everything which now thou art,
Be nothing which thou art not.
So with the world thy gentle ways,
Thy grace, thy more than beauty,
Shall be an endless theme of praise,
And love—a simple duty.
1835, 1845 1835, 1845

THE CONQUEROR WORM[3]

Lo! 't is a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years.
An angel throng, bewinged, bedight
In veils, and drowned in tears,
Sit in a theater to see
A play of hopes and fears,
While the orchestra breathes fitfully
The music of the spheres.

Mimes, in the form of God on high,
Mutter and mumble low,
And hither and thither fly;
Mere puppets they, who come and go
At bidding of vast formless things
That shift the scenery to and fro,
Flapping from out their condor wings
Invisible Woe.

That motley drama—oh, be sure
It shall not be forgot!
With its Phantom chased for evermore
By a crowd that seize it not,
Through a circle that ever returneth in
To the self-same spot;
And much of Madness, and more of Sin,
And Horror the soul of the plot.

[3] A colossal statue near Thebes, in Egypt, supposed to be that of Memnon, a solar hero-divinity, was said to give forth a musical note when struck by the rays of the rising sun.

[1] From Poe's tale, *The Assignation.*

[2] Mrs. Osgood belonged to Poe's literary circle.

[3] From Poe's tale, *Ligeia.*

But see amid the mimic rout
A crawling shape intrude:
A blood-red thing that writhes from out
The scenic solitude!
It writhes—it writhes!—with mortal pangs
The mimes become its food,
And seraphs sob at vermin fangs
In human gore imbued.

Out—out are the lights—out all!
And over each quivering form
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm,
While the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling, affirm
That the play is the tragedy, "Man,"
And its hero, the Conqueror Worm.

1843

THE RAVEN[1]

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore,—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"'T is some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door:
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore,
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore:
Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating
"'T is some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door,
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door:
This it is and nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you"—here I opened wide the door:—
Darkness there and nothing more.

Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore:"
Merely this and nothing more.

Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore;
Let my heart be still a moment and this mystery explore:
'T is the wind and nothing more."

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore.
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;

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[1] In *The Philosophy of Composition*, Poe gives an account of the manner in which he constructed *The Raven*, saying that he did it as he would work out a mathematical problem, by reasoning beforehand upon the nature of poetry, determining that beauty should be the essence of a poem, that sadness is the tone of the highest manifestation of beauty, that the refrain is the most effective of artistic devices, and that the refrain should be composed of sonorous and protractible sounds. The account may be taken for what it is worth. The present editor is inclined to regard it merely as part of a defense which Poe had been moved to make against an insinuation that in *The Raven* he had imitated the repetitions of phrases in Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*. . . . At any rate, against his peculiar explanation of the composition of *The Raven* should be set a sentence from his own preface to the 1845 edition of his poems: 'With me poetry has been not a purpose, but a passion, and the passions should be held in reverence.'" *Poems and Tales of Edgar Allan Poe*, edited by Alphonso G. Newcomer, *The Lake English Classics*.

But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door,
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door:
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.

Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling
By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore, —
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore:
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian[2] shore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

Much I marveled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning—little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door,
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."

But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.
Nothing further then he uttered, not a feather then he fluttered,
Till I scarcely more than muttered,—"Other friends have flown before;
On the morrow *he* will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before."
Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store,
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore:
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of 'Never—nevermore.'"

But the Raven still beguiling all my fancy into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore,
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamplight gloated o'er,
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamplight gloating o'er
She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.
"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee—by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite—respite and nepenthe[3] from thy memories of Lenore!
Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! prophet still, if bird or devil!
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted—
On this home by Horror haunted—tell me truly, I implore:
Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?[4]—tell me—tell me, I implore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us, by that God we both adore,
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,[5]
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore:
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

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[2] Pluto, in the Roman mythology, was ruler of the dead.

[3] A draught producing forgetfulness of pain.

[4] A region in eastern Palestine where a balm was produced. *Jeremiah* viii. 22.

[5] From Arabic *adn*, Eden, Paradise.

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting:
"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken! quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor:
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

1845

ULALUME[1]

The skies they were ashen and sober;
The leaves they were crisped and sere.
The leaves they were withering and sere;
It was night in the lonesome October
Of my most immemorial year;
It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
In the misty mid region of Weir:
It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Here once, through an alley Titanic
Of cypress, I roamed with my Soul—
Of cypress, with Psyche, my Soul.
These were days when my heart was volcanic
As the scoriac rivers that roll,
As the lavas that restlessly roll
Their sulphurous currents down Yaanek
In the ultimate climes of the pole,
That groan as they roll down Mount Yaanek
In the realms of the boreal pole.

Our talk had been serious and sober,
But our thoughts they were palsied and sere,
Our memories were treacherous and sere,
For we knew not the month was October,
And we marked not the night of the year,
(Ah, night of all nights in the year!)
We noted not the dim lake of Auber
(Though once we had journeyed down here),
Remembered not the dank tarn of Auber
Nor the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

And now, as the night was senescent
And star-dials pointed to morn,
As the star-dials hinted of morn,
At the end of our path a liquescent
And nebulous luster was born,
Out of which a miraculous crescent
Arose with a duplicate horn,
Astarte's[2] bediamonded crescent
Distinct with its duplicate horn.

And I said—"She is warmer than Dian:
She rolls through an ether of sighs,
She revels in a region of sighs:
She has seen that the tears are not dry on
These cheeks, where the worm never dies,
And has come past the stars of the Lion[3]
To point us the path to the skies,
To the Lethean peace of the skies:
Come up, in despite of the Lion,
To shine on us with her bright eyes:
Come up through the lair of the Lion,
With love in her luminous eyes."

But Psyche, uplifting her finger,
Said—"Sadly this star I mistrust,
Her pallor I strangely mistrust:
Oh, hasten!—oh, let us not linger!
Oh, fly!—let us fly!—for we must."
In terror she spoke, letting sink her

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[1] "The appeal of Poe's poetry is to the sentiment of Beauty—the one appeal which, according to Poe's theory, is the final justification of any poem. Language is made to yield its utmost of melody. From words, even from letters, one might say—for Poe actually fabricated words whose sounds would suit his purpose—effects were wrested such as had never been wrested before." . . . "This fantasy [*Ulalume*] is perhaps the supreme test of one's power to enjoy the strange music and imagery of Poe's verse without demanding any intellectual basis for the enjoyment. It is about as idle to search for a meaning in *Ulalume* as it would be to search in an atlas for the geographical names, and criticism will most safely keep silence." *Poems and Tales of Edgar Allan Poe*, edited by Alphonso G. Newcomer, *The Lake English Classics*. Perhaps, however, as one reader suggests, this poem portrays a slight rising of hope in a gloomy soul, the gloom coming back when the soul sinks again to its normal level. If so, it may have some definite biographical significance.

[2] Astarte, the Greek form of the Hebrew Ashtoreth, moon-goddess of the Phoenicians, corresponding to Diana, Dian of the Greeks.

[3] The constellation Leo.

Wings until they trailed in the dust;
In agony sobbed, letting sink her
Plumes till they trailed in the dust,
Till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust.

I replied—"This is nothing but dreaming:
Let us on by this tremulous light!
Let us bathe in this crystalline light!
Its sibyllic splendor is beaming
With hope and in beauty tonight:
See, it flickers up the sky through the night!
Ah, we safely may trust to its gleaming,
And be sure it will lead us aright:
We safely may trust to a gleaming
That cannot but guide us aright,
Since it flickers up to Heaven through the night."

Thus I pacified Psyche and kissed her,
And tempted her out of her gloom,
And conquered her scruples and gloom;
And we passed to the end of the vista,
But were stopped by the door of a tomb,
By the door of a legended tomb;
And I said—"What is written, sweet sister,
On the door of this legended tomb?"
She replied—"Ulalume—Ulalume —
'T is the vault of thy lost Ulalume!"

Then my heart it grew ashen and sober
As the leaves that were crisped and sere,
As the leaves that were withering and sere,
And I cried—"It was surely October
On this very night of last year
That I journeyed—I journeyed down here,
That I brought a dread burden down here:
On this night of all nights in the year,
Ah, what demon has tempted me here?
Well I know, now, this dim lake of Auber,
This misty mid region of Weir:
Well I know, now, this dank tarn of Auber,
This ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir."

1847

THE BELLS

I

Hear the sledges with the bells,
Silver bells!
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night!
While the stars, that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic[1] rime,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells —
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II

Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells!
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells!
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight!
From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon!
Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells!
How it swells!
How it dwells
On the Future! how it tells
Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the riming and the chiming of the bells!

III

Hear the loud alarum bells,
Brazen bells!
What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells!
In the startled ear of night
How they scream out their affright!
Too much horrified to speak,
They can only shriek, shriek,
Out of tune,
In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire,

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[1] Secret, mysterious, as the ancient inscriptions or runes of northern Europe were secret to all but the initiated.

Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavor
Now—now to sit or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.
Oh, the bells, bells, bells!
What a tale their terror tells
Of Despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar!
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!
Yet the ear it fully knows,
By the twanging
And the clanging,
How the danger ebbs and flows;
Yet the ear distinctly tells,
In the jangling
And the wrangling,
How the danger sinks and swells,—
By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells,
Of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
In the clamor and the clangor of the bells!

IV

Hear the tolling of the bells,
Iron bells!
What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!
In the silence of the night
How we shiver with affright
At the melancholy menace of their tone!
For every sound that floats
From the rust within their throats
Is a groan.
And the people—ah, the people,
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who tolling, tolling, tolling
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone—
They are neither man nor woman,
They are neither brute nor human,
They are Ghouls:
And their king it is who tolls;
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A pæan from the bells;
And his merry bosom swells
With the pæan of the bells,
And he dances, and he yells:
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rime,
To the pæan of the bells,
Of the bells:
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rime,
To the throbbing of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells—
To the sobbing of the bells;
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rime,
To the rolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells:
To the tolling of the bells,
Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells—
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

1848-49 1849

ANNABEL LEE[1]

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and she was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love,
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the winged seraphs of heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulcher
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in heaven,
Went envying her and me;
Yes! that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we,
Of many far wiser than we;

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[1] Stedman in his introduction to the poems of Poe says that this poem was doubtless inspired by the memory of Poe's wife, Virginia Clemm.

And neither the angels in heaven above,
Nor the demons down under the sea,
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:

For the moon never beams, without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise, but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In her sepulcher there by the sea,
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

1849 1849

ELDORADO[2]

Gayly bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old,
This knight so bold,
And o'er his heart a shadow
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow;
"Shadow," said he,
"Where can it be,
This land of Eldorado?"

"Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,"
The shade replied,
"If you seek for Eldorado!"

1850

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER[1]

> Son coeur est un luth suspendu;
> Sitôt qu'on le touche il résonne.
> BÉRANGER.[2]

During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country, and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was—but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain, upon the bleak walls, upon the vacant eye-like windows, upon a few rank sedges, and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveler upon opium: the bitter lapse into every-day life, the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart, an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it—I paused to think—what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion, that while, beyond doubt, there *are* combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate, its capacity for sorrowful impression; and acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder even more thrilling than before—upon the remodeled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I now proposed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country—a letter from him—which in its wildly importunate nature had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness, of a mental disorder which oppressed him, and of an earnest desire to see me, as his best and indeed his only personal friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness of my society, some alleviation of his malady. It was the manner in which all this, and much more, was said—it was the apparent *heart* that went with his request—which allowed me no room for hesitation; and I accordingly obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singular summons.

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[2] Spanish, golden; here, the land of the ideal.

[1] Poe's purely imaginative tales move in a land that no man has ever visited, under clouds or sunshine such as none have ever seen. It is not a little pathetic, and it shows, if proof were needed, the essential poetry of his nature, that amid all the misfortunes and wretchedness of his actual life he could still live in this all-enveloping realm of his own creation.

[2] "His heart is a lute suspended; as soon as it is touched it resounds." Béranger was a French lyric poet contemporary with Poe, but the lines quoted have not been found in his work.

Although as boys we had been even intimate associates, yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages, in many works of exalted art, and manifested of late in repeated deeds of munificent yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognizable beauties, of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth at no period any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other—it was this deficiency, perhaps, of collateral issue, and the consequent undeviating transmission from sire to son of the patrimony with the name, which had, at length, so identified the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the "House of Usher"—an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment, that of looking down within the tarn, had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition—for why should I not so term it?—served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself, from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy—a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity: an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn: a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine tangled web-work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts and the crumbling condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded me of the specious totality of old wood-work which has rotted for long years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the studio of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me—while the carvings of the ceilings, the somber tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy—while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this—I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the staircases, I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality—of the constrained effort of the *ennuyé*[3] man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion; an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison; lips somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surpassingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely molded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than web-like softness and tenuity; these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous luster of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture, it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque[4] expression with any idea of simple humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence, an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome an habitual trepidancy, an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical conformation and temperament. His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of energetic concision — that abrupt, weighty, unhurried, and hollow-sounding enunciation—that leaden, self-balanced and perfectly modulated guttural utterance—which may be observed in the lost drunkard, or the irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most intense excitement.

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered, at some length, into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy—a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me; although, perhaps, the terms and the general manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses; the most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.

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[3] bored

[4] fantastic; unusual in this sense.

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave. "I shall perish," said he, "I *must* perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this intolerable agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect—in terror. In this unnerved—in this pitiable condition, I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together, in some struggle with the grim phantasm, FEAR."

I learned moreover at intervals, and through broken and equivocal hints, another singular feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence, for many years, he had never ventured forth—in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be restated—an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion, had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit—an effect which the physique of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had, at length, brought about upon the morale of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin—to the severe and long-continued illness, indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution, of a tenderly beloved sister—his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth. 'Her decease,' he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, 'would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers.' While he spoke the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread, and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door, at length, closed upon her, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother; but he had buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive that a far more than ordinary wanness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed; but, on the closing in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed (as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation) to the prostrating power of the destroyer; and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain—that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing, her name was unmentioned by either Usher or myself; and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavors to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together; or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempt at cheering a mind from which darkness, as if an inherent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in any attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupations, in which he involved me, or led the way. An excited and highly distempered ideality threw a sulphurous luster over all. His long improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber.[5] From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy

[5] A German composer, 1786-1826.

brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrillingly because I shuddered knowing not why;—from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher. For me at least, in the circumstances then surrounding me, there arose, out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.[6]

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain accessory points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent, and no torch or other artificial source of light was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays rolled throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid *facility* of his impromptus could not be so accounted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes, as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rimed verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I have previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it, as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness, on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled "The Haunted Palace," ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus:—

I

In the greenest of our valleys
  By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace—
  Radiant palace—reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion,
  It stood there;
Never seraph spread a pinion
  Over fabric half so fair.

II

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
  On its roof did float and flow,
(This—all this—was in the olden
  Time long ago)
And every gentle air that dallied,
  In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
  A wingéd odor went away.

III

Wanderers in that happy valley
  Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
  To a lute's well-tunéd law,
Round about a throne where, sitting,
  Porphyrogene,[7]
In state his glory well befitting,
  The ruler of the realm was seen.

IV

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
  Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing,
  And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty
  Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
  The wit and wisdom of their king.

V

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
  Assailed the monarch's high estate;
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
  Shall dawn upon him, desolate!)
And round about his home the glory
  That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim-remembered story
  Of the old time entombed.

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[6] A Swiss-English painter, 1741-1825. His work is noted for its fantastic intensity.

[7] "Born to the purple." Said of a son born to a reigning monarch.

VI

And travelers now within that valley
  Through the red-litten windows see
Vast forms that move fantastically
  To a discordant melody;
While, like a ghastly rapid river,
  Through the pale door
A hideous throng rush out forever,
  And laugh—but smile no more.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad led us into a train of thought, wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I mention not so much on account of its novelty, (for other men[8] have thought thus), as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentience of all vegetable things. But in his disordered fancy the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganization.[9] I lack words to express the full extent, or the earnest *abandon* of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentience had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones—in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many fungi which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around—above all, in the long undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence—the evidence of the sentience—was to be seen, he said (and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent, yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had molded the destinies of his family, and which made *him* what I now saw him—what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books—the books which, for years, had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid—were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the *Ververt* and *Chartreuse* of Gresset; the *Belphegor* of Machiavelli; the *Heaven and Hell* of Swedenborg; the *Subterranean Voyage of Nicholas Klimm* by Holberg; the *Chiromancy* of Robert Flud, of Jean d'Indaginé, and of De la Chambre; the *Journey into the Blue Distance* of Tieck; and the *City of the Sun* of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the *Directorium Inquisitorum* by the Dominican Eymeric de Gironne, and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African Satyrs and Ægipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic—the manual of a forgotten church—the *Vigiliae Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesiae Maguntinae.*[10]

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochondriac, when one evening, having informed me abruptly that the lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight, (previously to its final interment) in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for this singular proceeding, was one which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution (so he told me) by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial-ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and by no means an unnatural precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of admission for light; lying, at great depth, immediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used, apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon-keep, and in later days as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been, also, similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound, as it moved upon its hinges.

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[8] "Watson, Dr. Percival, Spallanzini, and especially the Bishop of Landaff.—See *Chemical Essays, Vol. V.*" (Poe's note). Richard Watson, Bishop of Landaff, friend of Franklin, 1737-1816; Spallanzini, an Italian scientist, 1729-1799; Percival, an American scientist and poet, 1795-1856.

[9] inorganic matter

[10] One may reasonably infer that Poe in marshaling this array of rather out-of-the-way books, most of which are tinged with mysticism or the occult, wishes to deepen the atmosphere of horror as well as to impress us with the width of his reading. The last mentioned book, *Vigils for the Dead According to the Choir of the Church of Mayence,* has not been traced. Poe did not scruple to invent when actual material failed.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher, divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead—for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and, having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue—but the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quaver, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness, for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified—that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influences of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.

It was, especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch, while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavored to believe that much, if not all, of what I felt was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room—of the dark and tattered draperies which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor gradually pervaded my frame; and at length there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and, peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, hearkened—I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me—to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste, (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night) and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition into which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my attention. I presently recognized it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped with a gentle touch at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan—but, moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes—an evidently restrained hysteria in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me—but anything was preferable to the solitude which I had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

"And you have not seen it?" he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence—"you have not then seen it?—but, stay! you shall." Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirlwind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity; for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the life-like velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this; yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars, nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as all terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

"You must not—you shall not behold this!" said I, shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him with a gentle violence from the window to a seat. "These appearances which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon—or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement; the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read, and you shall listen;—and so we will pass away this terrible night together."

The antique volume which I had taken up was the *Mad Trist* of Sir Launcelot Canning;[11] but I had called it a favorite of Usher's more in sad jest than in earnest; for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand; and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild overstrained air of vivacity with which he hearkened, or apparently hearkened, to the words of the tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the *Trist,* having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus:—

> And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal, on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and maliceful turn, but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and with blows made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his gauntleted hand and now pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarumed and reverberated throughout the forest.

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me)—it appeared to me that from some very remote portion of the mansion there came, indistinctly, to my ears, what might have been, in its exact similarity of character, the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for, amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story:—

> But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged, and amazed to perceive no signal of the maliceful hermit; but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold, with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten—
>
> Who entereth herein, a conqueror
> hath bin;
> Who slayeth the dragon, the shield
> he shall win.
>
> And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with

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[11] Since no one has identified author or book, both are probably the invention of Poe.

> a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard.

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement; for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound—the exact counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed, as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although, assuredly, a strange alteration had during the last few minutes taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber; and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast—yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and rigid opening of the eye as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea—for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded:—

> And now, the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound.

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips, than—as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver—I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic and clangorous yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it?—yes, I hear it, and *have* heard it. Long—long—long—many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it—yet I dared not—oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am!—I dared not—I *dared* not speak! *We have put her living in the tomb!* Said I not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them—many, many days ago—yet I dared not—*I dared not speak!* And now tonight—Ethelred—ha! ha!—the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield!—say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horrible beating of her heart? Madman!"—here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul—*"Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!"*

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell, the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust[12]—but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher. There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and, in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated.

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[12] "Perhaps this is the finest touch in the tale. The reader is fully prepared for the apparition of the lady Madeline. Then, for the briefest possible moment, with the natural explanation of the opening of the doors, his expectation is disappointed, to the great intensifying of the thrill that follows when, after all, the apparition is revealed." *Poems and Tales of Edgar Allan Poe*, edited by Alphonso G. Newcomer, *The Lake English Classics.*

From that chamber, and from that mansion, I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the *"House of Usher."*[13]

1839

A DESCENT INTO THE MAELSTROM[1]

> The ways of God in Nature, as in Providence, are not as *our* ways; nor are the models that we frame any way commensurate to the vastness, profundity, and unsearchableness of His works, *which have a depth in them greater than the well of Democritus.*
>
> JOSEPH GLANVILL.[2]

We had now reached the summit of the loftiest crag. For some minutes the old man seemed too much exhausted to speak.

"Not long ago," said he at length, "and I could have guided you on this route as well as the youngest of my sons; but, about three years past, there happened to me an event such as never happened before to mortal man—or at least such as no man ever survived to tell of—and the six hours of deadly terror which I then endured have broken me up body and soul. You suppose me a *very* old man—but I am not. It took less than a single day to change these hairs from a jetty black to white, to weaken my limbs, and to unstring my nerves, so that I tremble at the least exertion, and am frightened at a shadow. Do you know I can scarcely look over this little cliff without getting giddy?"

The "little cliff," upon whose edge he had so carelessly thrown himself down to rest that the weightier portion of his body hung over it, while he was only kept from falling by the tenure of his elbow on its extreme and slippery edge—this "little cliff" arose, a sheer unobstructed precipice of black shining rock, some fifteen or sixteen hundred feet from the world of crags beneath us. Nothing would have tempted me to within half a dozen yards of its brink. In truth so deeply was I excited by the perilous position of my companion, that I fell at full length upon the ground, clung to the shrubs around me, and dared not even glance upward at the sky—while I struggled in vain to divest myself of the idea that the very foundations of the mountain were in danger from the fury of the winds. It was long before I could reason myself into sufficient courage to sit up and look out into the distance.

"You must get over these fancies," said the guide, "for I have brought you here that you might have the best possible view of the scene of that event I mentioned—and to tell you the whole story with the spot just under your eye.

"We are now," he continued, in that particularizing manner which distinguished him—"we are now close upon the Norwegian coast—in the sixty-eighth degree of latitude—in the great province of Nordland—and in the dreary district of Lofoden. The mountain upon whose top we sit is Helseggen, the

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[13] If the student does not at first comprehend the perfection of this story he should re-read it until he gets some idea of how ingeniously part answers to part. Poe himself in reviewing Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales* said: "A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single *effect* to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one preëstablished design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed."

[1] A strong and dangerous tidal current, not literally a whirlpool, really exists on the coast of Norway. Although Poe had never visited the scene of the tale, he is fairly correct in his references to actual places.

[2] Joseph Glanvill was an English divine of the seventeenth century. Democritus of Abdera was a contemporary of Socrates and one of the founders of the atomic philosophy. The "well" is perhaps the infinite void through which he conceived atoms, the ultimate material of all things, to be moving.

Cloudy. Now raise yourself up a little higher—hold on to the grass if you feel giddy—so—and look out, beyond the belt of vapor beneath us, into the sea."

I looked dizzily, and beheld a wide expanse of ocean, whose waters wore so inky a hue as to bring at once to my mind the Nubian geographer's account of the *Mare Tenebrarum*.[3] A panorama more deplorably desolate no human imagination can conceive. To the right and left, as far as the eye could reach, there lay outstretched, like ramparts of the world, lines of horridly black and beetling cliff, whose character of gloom was but the more forcibly illustrated by the surf which reared high up against it its white and ghastly crest, howling and shrieking forever. Just opposite the promontory upon whose apex we were placed, and at a distance of some five or six miles out at sea, there was visible a small, bleak-looking island; or, more properly, its position was discernible through the wilderness of surge in which it was enveloped. About two miles nearer the land arose another of smaller size, hideously craggy and barren, and encompassed at various intervals by a cluster of dark rocks.

The appearance of the ocean, in the space between the more distant island and the shore, had something very unusual about it. Although, at the time, so strong a gale was blowing landward that a brig in the remote offing lay to under a double-reefed trysail, and constantly plunged her whole hull out of sight, still, there was here nothing like a regular swell, but only a short, quick, angry cross-dashing of water in every direction—as well in the teeth of the wind as otherwise. Of foam there was little except in the immediate vicinity of the rocks.

"The island in the distance," resumed the old man, "is called by the Norwegians Vurrgh. The one midway is Moskoe. That a mile to the northward is Ambaaren. Yonder are Iflesen, Hoeyholm, Kieldholm, Suarven, and Buckholm. Farther off—between Moskoe and Vurrgh—are Otterholm, Flimen, Sandflesen, and Skarholm. These are the true names of the places—but why it has been thought necessary to name them at all is more than either you or I can understand. Do you hear anything? Do you see any change in the water?"

We had now been about ten minutes upon the top of Helseggen, to which we had ascended from the interior of Lofoden, so that we had caught no glimpse of the sea until it had burst upon us from the summit. As the old man spoke, I became aware of a loud and gradually increasing sound, like the moaning of a vast herd of buffaloes upon an American prairie; and at the same moment I perceived that what seamen term the *chopping* character of the ocean beneath us, was rapidly changing into a current which set to the eastward. Even while I gazed, this current acquired a monstrous velocity. Each moment added to its speed—to its headlong impetuosity. In five minutes the whole sea, as far as Vurrgh, was lashed into ungovernable fury; but it was between Moskoe and the coast that the main uproar held its sway. Here the vast bed of the waters, seamed and scarred into a thousand conflicting channels, burst suddenly into frenzied convulsion—heaving, boiling, hissing—gyrating in gigantic and innumerable vortices, and all whirling and plunging on to the eastward with a rapidity which water never elsewhere assumes, except in precipitous descents.

In a few minutes more, there came over the scene another radical alteration. The general surface grew somewhat more smooth, and the whirlpools, one by one, disappeared, while prodigious streaks of foam became apparent where none had been seen before. These streaks, at length, spreading out to a great distance, and entering into combination, took unto themselves the gyratory motion of the subsided vortices, and seemed to form the germ of another more vast. Suddenly—very suddenly—this assumed a distinct and definite existence, in a circle of more than a mile in diameter. The edge of the whirl was represented by a broad belt of gleaming spray; but no particle of this slipped into the mouth of the terrific funnel, whose interior, as far as the eye could fathom it, was a smooth, shining, and jet-black wall of water, inclined to the horizon at an angle of some forty-five degrees, speeding dizzily round and round with a swaying and sweltering motion, and sending forth to the winds an appalling voice, half shriek, half roar, such as not even the mighty cataract of Niagara ever lifts up in its agony to Heaven.

The mountain trembled to its very base, and the rock rocked. I threw myself upon my face, and clung to the scant herbage in an excess of nervous agitation.

"This," said I at length, to the old man—"this *can* be nothing else than the great whirlpool of the Maelström."

"So it is sometimes termed," said he. "We

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[3] The sea of darkness, the outer ocean unexplored by the dwellers about the Mediterranean. "The Nubian geographer" is Ptolemy Chennus, an Alexandrian of the time of Trajan. There is no proof that he was a Nubian.

Norwegians call it the Moskoe-ström, from the island of Moskoe in the midway."

The ordinary accounts of this vortex had by no means prepared me for what I saw. That of Jonas Ramus,[4] which is perhaps the most circumstantial of any, cannot impart the faintest conception either of the magnificence or of the horror of the scene—or of the wild bewildering sense of *the novel* which confounds the beholder. I am not sure from what point of view the writer in question surveyed it, nor at what time; but it could neither have been from the summit of Helseggen, nor during a storm. There are some passages of his description, nevertheless, which may be quoted for their details, although their effect is exceedingly feeble in conveying an impression of the spectacle.

> "Between Lofoden and Moskoe," he says, "the depth of the water is between thirty-six and forty fathoms; but on the other side, toward Ver (Vurrgh), this depth decreases so as not to afford a convenient passage for a vessel, without the risk of splitting on the rocks, which happens even in the calmest weather. When it is flood, the stream runs up the country between Lofoden and Moskoe with a boisterous rapidity; but the roar of its impetuous ebb to the sea is scarce equaled by the loudest and most dreadful cataracts, the noise being heard several leagues off; and the vortices or pits are of such an extent and depth, that if a ship comes within its attraction, it is inevitably absorbed and carried down to the bottom, and there beat to pieces against the rocks; and when the water relaxes, the fragments thereof are thrown up again. But these intervals of tranquillity are only at the turn of the ebb and flood, and in calm weather, and last but a quarter of an hour, its violence gradually returning. When the stream is most boisterous, and its fury heightened by a storm, it is dangerous to come within a Norway mile of it. Boats, yachts, and ships have been carried away by not guarding against it before they were within its reach. It likewise happens frequently that whales come too near the stream, and are overpowered by its violence; but then it is impossible to describe their howlings and bellowings in their fruitless struggles to disengage themselves. A bear once, attempting to swim from Lofoden to Moskoe, was caught by the stream and borne down, while he roared terribly, so as to be heard on shore. Large stocks of firs and pine trees, after being absorbed by the current, rise again broken and torn to such a degree as if bristles grew upon them. This plainly shows the bottom to consist of craggy rocks, among which they are whirled to and fro. This stream is regulated by the flux and reflux of the sea—it being constantly high and low water every six hours. In the year 1645, early in the morning of Sexagesima Sunday, it raged with such noise and impetuosity that the very stones of the houses on the coast fell to the ground."

In regard to the depth of the water, I could not see how this could have been ascertained at all in the immediate vicinity of the vortex. The "forty fathoms" must have reference only to portions of the channel close upon the shore either of Moskoe or Lofoden. The depth in the center of the Moskoe-ström must be immeasurably greater; and no better proof of this fact is necessary than can be obtained from even the sidelong glance into the abyss of the whirl which may be had from the highest crag of Helseggen. Looking down from this pinnacle upon the howling Phlegethon[5] below, I could not help smiling at the simplicity with which the honest Jonas Ramus records, as a matter difficult of belief, the anecdotes of the whales and the bears; for it appeared to me, in fact, a self-evident thing that the largest ships of the line in existence, coming within the influence of that deadly attraction, could resist it as little as a feather the hurricane, and must disappear bodily and at once.

The attempts to account for the phenomenon—some of which, I remember, seemed to me sufficiently plausible in perusal—now wore a very different and unsatisfactory aspect. The idea generally received is that this, as well as three smaller vortices among the Feroe Islands, "have no other cause than the collision of waves rising and falling, at flux and reflux, against a ridge of rocks and shelves, which confines the water so that it precipitates itself like a cataract; and thus the higher the flood rises, the deeper must the fall be, and the natural result of all is a whirlpool or vortex, the prodigious suction of which is sufficiently known by lesser experiments."—These are the words of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica.* Kircher[6] and others imagine that in the center of the channel of the Maelström is an abyss penetrating the globe, and issuing in some very remote part—the Gulf of Bothnia being somewhat decidedly named in one instance. This opinion, idle in itself, was the one to which, as I gazed, my imagination most readily assented; and, mentioning it to the guide, I was rather surprised to hear him say that, although it was the view almost universally entertained of the subject by the Norwegians, it nevertheless was not his own. As to the former notion he confessed his inability to comprehend it; and here I agreed with him—for, however conclusive on paper, it becomes altogether unintelligible, and even absurd, amid the thunder of the abyss.

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[4] A Norse historian of the seventeenth century.

[5] The flaming river of the lower world.

[6] A seventeenth century German mathematician.

"You have had a good look at the whirl now," said the old man, "and if you will creep round this crag, so as to get in its lee, and deaden the roar of the water, I will tell you a story that will convince you I ought to know something of the Moskoe-ström."

I placed myself as desired, and he proceeded.

"Myself and my two brothers once owned a schooner-rigged smack of about seventy tons burden, with which we were in the habit of fishing among the islands beyond Moskoe, nearly to Vurrgh. In all violent eddies at sea there is good fishing, at proper opportunities, if one has only the courage to attempt it; but among the whole of the Lofoden coastmen we three were the only ones who made a regular business of going out to the islands, as I tell you. The usual grounds are a great way lower down to the southward. There fish can be got at all hours, without much risk, and therefore these places are preferred. The choice spots over here among the rocks, however, not only yield the finest variety, but in far greater abundance; so that we often got in a single day what the more timid of the craft could not scrape together in a week. In fact, we made it a matter of desperate speculation—the risk of life standing instead of labor, and courage answering for capital.

"We kept the smack in a cove about five miles higher up the coast than this; and it was our practice, in fine weather, to take advantage of the fifteen minutes' slack to push across the main channel of the Moskoe-ström, far above the pool, and then drop down upon anchorage somewhere near Otterholm, or Sandflesen, where the eddies are not so violent as elsewhere. Here we used to remain until nearly time for slack water again, when we weighed and made for home. We never set out upon this expedition without a steady side wind for going and coming—one that we felt sure would not fail us before our return—and we seldom made a miscalculation upon this point. Twice, during six years, we were forced to stay all night at anchor on account of a dead calm, which is a rare thing indeed just about here; and once we had to remain on the grounds nearly a week, starving to death, owing to a gale which blew up shortly after our arrival, and made the channel too boisterous to be thought of. Upon this occasion we should have been driven out to sea in spite of everything (for the whirlpools threw us round and round so violently that, at length, we fouled our anchor and dragged it) if it had not been that we drifted into one of the innumerable cross currents—here today and gone tomorrow—which drove us under the lee of Flimen, where, by good luck, we brought up.

"I could not tell you the twentieth part of the difficulties we encountered 'on the ground'—it is a bad spot to be in, even in good weather—but we made shift always to run the gauntlet of the Moskoe-ström itself without accident; although at times my heart has been in my mouth when we happened to be a minute or so behind or before the slack. The wind sometimes was not as strong as we thought it at starting, and then we made rather less way than we could wish, while the current rendered the smack unmanageable. My eldest brother had a son eighteen years old, and I had two stout boys of my own. These would have been of great assistance at such times, in using the sweeps,[7] as well as afterward in fishing—but, somehow, although we ran the risk ourselves, we had not the heart to let the young ones get into the danger—for, after all said and done, it *was* a horrible danger, and that is the truth.

"It is now within a few days of three years since what I am going to tell you occurred. It was on the tenth of July, 18—, a day which the people of this part of the world will never forget—for it was one in which blew the most terrible hurricane that ever came out of the heavens. And yet all the morning, and indeed until late in the afternoon, there was a gentle and steady breeze from the southwest, while the sun shone brightly, so that the oldest seaman among us could not have foreseen what was to follow.

"The three of us—my two brothers and myself—had crossed over to the islands about two o'clock P. M., and soon nearly loaded the smack with fine fish, which, we all remarked, were more plenty that day than we had ever known them. It was just seven, *by my watch,* when we weighed and started for home, so as to make the worst of the Ström at slack water, which we knew would be at eight.

"We set out with a fresh wind on our starboard quarter, and for some time spanked along at a great rate, never dreaming of danger, for indeed we saw not the slightest reason to apprehend it. All at once we were

[7] large oars used in guiding or propelling a vessel.

taken aback[8] by a breeze from over Helseggen. This was most unusual—something that had never happened to us before—and I began to feel a little uneasy, without exactly knowing why. We put the boat on the wind, but could make no headway at all for the eddies, and I was upon the point of proposing to return to the anchorage, when, looking astern, we saw the whole horizon covered with a singular copper-colored cloud that rose with the most amazing velocity.

"In the mean time the breeze that had headed us off fell away, and we were dead becalmed, drifting about in every direction. This state of things, however, did not last long enough to give us time to think about it. In less than a minute the storm was upon us—in less than two the sky was entirely overcast—and what with this and the driving spray, it became suddenly so dark that we could not see each other in the smack.

"Such a hurricane as then blew it is folly to attempt describing. The oldest seaman in Norway never experienced anything like it. We had let our sails go by the run before it cleverly[9] took us; but, at the first puff, both our masts went by the board as if they had been sawed off—the mainmast taking with it my youngest brother, who had lashed himself to it for safety.

"Our boat was the lightest feather of a thing that ever sat upon water. It had a complete flush deck, with only a small hatch near the bow, and this hatch it had always been our custom to batten down when about to cross the Ström, by way of precaution against the chopping seas. But for this circumstance we should have foundered at once—for we lay entirely buried for some moments. How my elder brother escaped destruction I cannot say, for I never had an opportunity of ascertaining. For my part, as soon as I had let the foresail run, I threw myself flat on deck, with my feet against the narrow gunwale of the bow, and with my hands grasping a ringbolt near the foot of the foremast. It was mere instinct that prompted me to do this—which was undoubtedly the very best thing I could have done—for I was too much flurried to think.

"For some moments we were completely deluged, as I say, and all this time I held my breath, and clung to the bolt. When I could stand it no longer I raised myself upon my knees, still keeping hold with my hands, and thus got my head clear. Presently our little boat gave herself a shake, just as a dog does in coming out of the water, and thus rid herself, in some measure, of the seas. I was now trying to get the better of the stupor that had come over me, and to collect my senses so as to see what was to be done, when I felt somebody grasp my arm. It was my elder brother, and my heart leaped for joy, for I had made sure that he was overboard—but the next moment all this joy was turned into horror—for he put his mouth close to my ear, and screamed out the word *'Moskoe-ström!'*

"No one will ever know what my feelings were at that moment. I shook from head to foot as if I had had the most violent fit of the ague. I knew what he meant by that one word well enough—I knew what he wished to make me understand. With the wind that now drove us on, we were bound for the whirl of the Ström, and nothing could save us!

"You perceive that in crossing the Ström *channel,* we always went a long way up above the whirl, even in the calmest weather, and then had to wait and watch carefully for the slack—but now we were driving right upon the pool itself, and in such a hurricane as this! 'To be sure,' I thought, 'we shall get there just about the slack—there is some little hope in that'—but in the next moment I cursed myself for being so great a fool as to dream of hope at all. I knew very well that we were doomed, had we been ten times a ninety-gun ship.

"By this time the first fury of the tempest had spent itself, or perhaps we did not feel it so much as we scudded before it; but at all events the seas, which at first had been kept down by the wind, and lay flat and frothing, now got up into absolute mountains. A singular change, too, had come over the heavens. Around in every direction it was still as black as pitch, but nearly overhead there burst out, all at once, a circular rift of clear sky—as clear as I ever saw—and of a deep bright blue—and through it there blazed forth the full moon with a luster that I never before knew her to wear. She lit up everything about us with the greatest distinctness—but, oh God, what a scene it was to light up!

"I now made one or two attempts to speak to my brother—but, in some manner which I could not understand, the din had so increased that I could not make him hear a single word, although I screamed at the top of my voice in his ear. Presently he shook his head, looking as pale as death, and held up one of his fingers, as if to say *listen!*

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[8] See note 11, Cooper, *The Pilot*, p. 248.

[9] actually

"At first I could not make out what he meant—but soon a hideous thought flashed upon me. I dragged my watch from its fob. It was not going. I glanced at its face by the moonlight, and then burst into tears as I flung it far away into the ocean. *It had run down at seven o'clock! We were behind the time of the slack, and the whirl of the Ström was in full fury!*

"When a boat is well built, properly trimmed, and not deep laden, the waves in a strong gale, when she is going large,[10] seem always to slip from beneath her—which appears very strange to a landsman—and this is what is called *riding,* in sea phrase.

"Well, so far we had ridden the swells very cleverly; but presently a gigantic sea happened to take us right under the counter, and bore us with it as it rose—up—up—as if into the sky. I would not have believed that any wave could rise so high. And then down we came with a sweep, a slide, and a plunge, that made me feel sick and dizzy, as if I was falling from some lofty mountain-top in a dream. But while we were up I had thrown a quick glance around—and that one glance was all-sufficient. I saw our exact position in an instant. The Moskoe-ström whirlpool was about a quarter of a mile dead ahead—but no more like the everyday Moskoe-ström, than the whirl as you now see it is like a millrace. If I had not known where we were, and what we had to expect, I should not have recognized the place at all. As it was, I involuntarily closed my eyes in horror. The lids clenched themselves together as if in a spasm.

"It could not have been more than two minutes afterwards until we suddenly felt the waves subside, and were enveloped in foam. The boat made a sharp half turn to larboard, and then shot off in its new direction like a thunderbolt. At the same moment the roaring noise of the water was completely drowned in a kind of shrill shriek—such a sound as you might imagine given out by the water-pipes of many thousand steam vessels, letting off their steam all together. We were now in the belt of surf that always surrounds the whirl; and I thought, of course, that another moment would plunge us into the abyss—down which we could only see indistinctly on account of the amazing velocity with which we were borne along. The boat did not seem to sink into the water at all, but to skim like an air-bubble upon the surface of the surge. Her starboard side was next the whirl, and on the larboard arose the world of ocean we had left. It stood like a huge writhing wall between us and the horizon.

"It may appear strange, but now, when we were in the very jaws of the gulf, I felt more composed than when we were only approaching it. Having made up my mind to hope no more, I got rid of a great deal of that terror which unmanned me at first. I suppose it was despair that strung my nerves.

"It may look like boasting—but what I tell you is truth—I began to reflect how magnificent a thing it was to die in such a manner, and how foolish it was in me to think of so paltry a consideration as my own individual life, in view of so wonderful a manifestation of God's power. I do believe that I blushed with shame when this idea crossed my mind. After a little while I became possessed with the keenest curiosity about the whirl itself. I positively felt a *wish* to explore its depths, even at the sacrifice I was going to make; and my principal grief was that I should never be able to tell my old companions on shore about the mysteries I should see. These, no doubt, were singular fancies to occupy a man's mind in such extremity—and I have often thought since, that the revolutions of the boat around the pool might have rendered me a little light-headed.

"There was another circumstance which tended to restore my self-possession; and this was the cessation of the wind, which could not reach us in our present situation—for, as you saw yourself, the belt of surf is considerably lower than the general bed of the ocean, and this latter now towered above us, a high, black, mountainous ridge. If you have never been at sea in a heavy gale, you can form no idea of the confusion of mind occasioned by the wind and spray together. They blind, deafen, and strangle you, and take away all power of action or reflection. But we were now, in a great measure, rid of these annoyances—just as death-condemned felons in prisons are allowed petty indulgences, forbidden them while their doom is yet uncertain.

"How often we made the circuit of the belt it is impossible to say. We careered round and round for perhaps an hour, flying rather than floating, getting gradually more and more into the middle of the surge, and then nearer and nearer to its horrible inner edge. All this time I had never let go of the ringbolt. My brother was at the stern, holding on to a small empty water-cask which had been securely lashed under the coop of the counter, and was the only thing on deck that had not been swept overboard when the gale first took us. As we approached the brink of the pit he let go his hold upon this, and made for the ring, from which, in the agony of his terror, he endeavored to force my hands, as it was not large enough to afford us both a secure grasp. I never felt deeper grief than when I saw him attempt this act—although I knew he was a madman when he did it—a raving maniac through sheer fright. I did not care, however, to contest the point with him. I knew it could make no difference whether either of us held on at all; so I let him have the bolt, and went astern to the cask. This there was no great difficulty in doing; for the smack flew round steadily enough, and upon an even keel—only swaying to and fro, with the immense sweeps and swelters of the whirl. Scarcely had I secured myself in my new position, when we gave a wild lurch to starboard, and rushed headlong into the abyss. I muttered a hurried prayer to God, and thought all was over.

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[10] See note 13, Cooper, *The Pilot,* p. 249.

"As I felt the sickening sweep of the descent, I had instinctively tightened my hold upon the barrel, and closed my eyes. For some seconds I dared not open them—while I expected instant destruction, and wondered that I was not already in my death-struggles with the water. But moment after moment elapsed. I still lived. The sense of falling had ceased; and the motion of the vessel seemed much as it had been before, while in the belt of foam, with the exception that she now lay more along.[11] I took courage and looked once again upon the scene.

"Never shall I forget the sensations of awe, horror, and admiration with which I gazed about me. The boat appeared to be hanging, as if by magic, midway down, upon the interior surface of a funnel vast in circumference, prodigious in depth, and whose perfectly smooth sides might have been mistaken for ebony, but for the bewildering rapidity with which they spun around, and for the gleaming and ghastly radiance they shot forth, as the rays of the full moon, from that circular rift amid the clouds which I have already described, streamed in a flood of golden glory along the black walls, and far away down into the inmost recesses of the abyss.

"At first I was too much confused to observe anything accurately. The general burst of terrific grandeur was all that I beheld. When I recovered myself a little, however, my gaze fell instinctively downward. In this direction I was able to obtain an unobstructed view, from the manner in which the smack hung on the inclined surface of the pool. She was quite upon an even keel—that is to say, her deck lay in a plane parallel with that of the water—but this latter sloped at an angle of more than forty-five degrees, so that we seemed to be lying upon our beam-ends. I could not help observing, nevertheless, that I had scarcely more difficulty in maintaining my hold and footing in this situation, than if we had been upon a dead level; and this, I suppose, was owing to the speed at which we revolved.

"The rays of the moon seemed to search the very bottom of the profound gulf; but still I could make out nothing distinctly, on account of a thick mist in which everything there was enveloped, and over which there hung a magnificent rainbow,[12] like that narrow and tottering bridge which Mussulmen say is the only pathway between Time and Eternity. This mist, or spray, was no doubt occasioned by the clashing of the great walls of the funnel, as they all met together at the bottom—but the yell that went up to the heavens from out of that mist, I dare not attempt to describe.

"Our first slide into the abyss itself, from the belt of foam above, had carried us to a great distance down the slope; but our farther descent was by no means proportionate. Round and round we swept—not with any uniform movement, but in dizzying swings and jerks, that sent us sometimes only a few hundred yards—sometimes nearly the complete circuit of the whirl. Our progress downward, at each revolution, was slow, but very perceptible.

"Looking about me upon the wide waste of liquid ebony on which we were thus borne, I perceived that our boat was not the only object in the embrace of the whirl. Both above and below us were visible fragments of vessels, large masses of building timber and trunks of trees, with many smaller articles, such as pieces of house furniture, broken boxes, barrels, and staves. I have already described the unnatural curiosity which had taken the place of my original terrors. It appeared to grow upon me as I drew nearer and nearer to my dreadful doom. I now began to watch, with a strange interest, the numerous things that floated in our company. I *must* have been delirious—for I even sought *amusement* in speculating upon the relative velocities of their several descents toward the foam below. 'This fir tree,' I found myself at one time saying, 'will certainly be the next thing that takes the awful plunge and disappears,'—and then I was disappointed to find that the wreck of a Dutch merchant ship overtook it and went down before. At length, after making several guesses of this nature, and being deceived in all—this fact—the fact of my invariable miscalculation, set me upon a train of reflection that made my limbs again tremble, and my heart beat heavily once more.

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[11] Lay more over, as if under a side wind.

[12] Poe is wrong here; a rainbow by moonlight is really very faint. But this error need not prejudice us against the imaginative vigor of the scene. The bridge Al Sirat, no broader than the edge of a scimitar, conducts the faithful across the gulf of hell, to paradise.

"It was not a new terror that thus affected me, but the dawn of a more exciting *hope.* This hope arose partly from memory, and partly from present observation. I called to mind the great variety of buoyant matter that strewed the coast of Lofoden, having been absorbed and then thrown forth by the Moskoe-ström. By far the greater number of the articles were shattered in the most extraordinary way—so chafed and roughened as to have the appearance of being stuck full of splinters—but then I distinctly recollected that there were *some* of them which were not disfigured at all. Now I could not account for this difference except by supposing that the roughened fragments were the only ones which had been *completely absorbed*—that the others had entered the whirl at so late a period of the tide, or, from some reason, had descended so slowly after entering, that they did not reach the bottom before the turn of the flood came, or of the ebb, as the case might be. I conceived it possible, in either instance, that they might thus be whirled up again to the level of the ocean, without undergoing the fate of those which had been drawn in more early or absorbed more rapidly. I made, also, three important observations. The first was, that as a general rule, the larger the bodies were, the more rapid their descent; the second, that, between two masses of equal extent, the one spherical, and the other *of any other shape,* the superiority in speed of descent was with the sphere; the third, that, between two masses of equal size, the one cylindrical, and the other of any other shape, the cylinder was absorbed the more slowly. Since my escape, I have had several conversations on this subject with an old schoolmaster of the district; and it was from him that I learned the use of the words 'cylinder' and 'sphere.' He explained to me—although I have forgotten the explanation—how what I observed was, in fact, the natural consequence of the forms of the floating fragments, and showed me how it happened that a cylinder, swimming in a vortex, offered more resistance to its suction, and was drawn in with greater difficulty, than an equally bulky body, of any form whatever.[13]

"There was one startling circumstance which went a great way in enforcing these observations, and rendering me anxious to turn them to account, and this was that, at every revolution, we passed something like a barrel, or else the yard or the mast of a vessel, while many of these things, which had been on our level when I first opened my eyes upon the wonders of the whirlpool, were now high up above us, and seemed to have moved but little from their original station.

"I no longer hesitated what to do. I resolved to lash myself securely to the water cask upon which I now held, to cut it loose from the counter, and to throw myself with it into the water. I attracted my brother's attention by signs, pointed to the floating barrels that came near us, and did everything in my power to make him understand what I was about to do. I thought at length that he comprehended my design—but, whether this was the case or not, he shook his head despairingly, and refused to move from his station by the ring-bolt. It was impossible to reach him; the emergency admitted of no delay; and so, with a bitter struggle, I resigned him to his fate, fastened myself to the cask by means of the lashings which secured it to the counter, and precipitated myself with it into the sea, without another moment's hesitation.

"The result was precisely what I had hoped it might be. As it is myself who now tell you this tale—as you see that I *did* escape—and as you are already in possession of the mode in which this escape was effected, and must therefore anticipate all that I have farther to say—I will bring my story quickly to conclusion. It might have been an hour, or thereabout, after my quitting the smack, when, having descended to a vast distance beneath me, it made three or four wild gyrations in rapid succession, and, bearing my loved brother with it, plunged headlong, at once and forever, into the chaos of foam below. The barrel to which I was attached sunk very little farther than half the distance between the bottom of the gulf and the spot at which I leaped overboard, before a great change took place in the character of the whirlpool. The slope of the sides of the vast funnel became momently less and less steep. The gyrations of the whirl grew, gradually, less and less violent. By degrees, the froth and the rainbow disappeared, and the bottom of the gulf seemed slowly to uprise. The sky was clear, the winds had gone down, and the full moon was setting radiantly in the west, when I found myself on the surface of the ocean, in full view of the shores of Lofoden, and above the spot where the pool of the Moskoe-ström *had been.* It was the hour of the slack, but the sea still heaved in mountainous waves from the effects of the hurricane. I was borne violently into the channel of the Ström, and in a few minutes was hurried down the coast into the 'grounds' of the fishermen. A boat picked me up—exhausted from fatigue—and (now that the danger was removed) speechless from the memory of its horror. Those who drew me on board were my old mates and daily companions, but they knew me no more than they would have known a traveler from the spirit-land. My hair, which had been raven-black the day before, was as white as you see it now. They say, too, that the whole expression of my countenance had changed. I told them my story—they did not believe it. I now tell it to you—and I can scarcely expect you to put more faith in it than did the merry fishermen of Lofoden."

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[13] "See Archimedes, *De iis Quæ Humido Vehuntur,* lib. ii," Poe's note.

1841

ELEONORA[1]

Sub conservatione formæ specificæ salva anima.
RAYMOND LULLY.[2]

I am come of a race noted for vigor of fancy and ardor of passion. Men have called me mad; but the question is not yet settled, whether madness is or is not the loftiest intelligence: whether much that is glorious, whether all that is profound, does not spring from disease of thought—from *moods* of mind exalted at the expense of the general intellect. They who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who dream only by night. In their gray visions they obtain glimpses of eternity, and thrill in awaking to find that they have been upon the verge of the great secret. In snatches, they learn something of the wisdom which is of good, and more of the mere knowledge which is of evil. They penetrate, however rudderless or compassless, into the vast ocean of the "light ineffable"; and again, like the adventures of the Nubian geographer, *"agressi sunt mare tenebrarum, quid in eo esset exploraturi."*[3]

We will say, then, that I am mad. I grant, at least, that there are two distinct conditions of my mental existence: the condition of a lucid reason, not to be disputed, and belonging to the memory of events forming the first epoch of my life—and a condition of shadow and doubt, appertaining to the present, and to the recollection of what constitutes the second great era of my being. Therefore what I shall tell of the earlier period, believe; and to what I may relate of the later time, give only such credit as may seem due; or doubt it altogether; or, if doubt it ye cannot, then play unto its riddle the Œdipus.[4]

She whom I loved in youth, and of whom I now pen calmly and distinctly these remembrances, was the sole daughter of the only sister of my mother long departed. Eleonora was the name of my cousin. We had always dwelled together, beneath a tropical sun, in the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass. No unguided footstep ever came upon that vale; for it lay far away up among a range of giant hills that hung beetling around about it, shutting out the sunlight from its sweetest recesses.[5] No path was trodden in its vicinity; and, to reach our happy home, there was need of putting back with force the foliage of many thousands of forest trees, and of crushing to death the glories of many millions of fragrant flowers. Thus it was that we lived all alone, knowing nothing of the world without the valley,—I, and my cousin, and her mother.

From the dim regions beyond the mountains at the upper end of our encircled domain, there crept out a narrow and deep river, brighter than all save the eyes of Eleonora; and, winding stealthily about in mazy courses, it passed away at length through a shadowy gorge, among hills still dimmer than those whence it had issued. We called it the "River of Silence;" for there seemed to be a hushing influence in its flow. No murmur arose from its bed, and so gently it wandered along that the pearly pebbles upon which we loved to gaze, far down within its bosom, stirred not at all, but lay in a motionless content, each in its own old station, shining on gloriously forever.

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[1] This tale moves in a world highly-colored, fantastically unreal, morbid perhaps, yet not as so often in Poe, grewsome. According to Professor Woodberry, it is the only tale of Poe's in which there is "any sign of the warmth, the vital sense, of human love."

[2] Raymond Lully, author of the motto, "With the preservation of a specific form, the soul is secure," was a Spanish alchemist and missionary of the thirteenth century.

[3] ". . . they entered the sea of darkness to explore its mystery." For "Nubian geographer," see Note 3, *The Maelström*, p. 332.

[4] Œdipus, King of Thebes, solved the riddle of the Sphinx.

[5] The topography is like that of the Happy Valley of Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas*.

The margin of the river, and of the many dazzling rivulets that glided through devious ways into its channel, as well as the spaces that extended from the margins away down into the depths of the streams until they reached the bed of pebbles at the bottom,—these spots, not less than the whole surface of the valley, from the river to the mountains that girdled it in, were carpeted all by a soft green grass, thick, short, perfectly even, and vanilla-perfumed, but so besprinkled throughout with the yellow buttercup, the white daisy, the purple violet, and the ruby-red asphodel, that its exceeding beauty spoke to our hearts in loud tones of the love and of the glory of God.

And, here and there, in groves about this grass, like wildernesses of dreams, sprang up fantastic trees, whose tall slender stems stood not upright, but slanted gracefully towards the light that peered at noonday into the center of the valley. Their bark was speckled with the vivid alternate splendor of ebony and silver, and was smoother than all save the cheeks of Eleonora; so that, but for the brilliant green of the huge leaves that spread from their summits in long, tremulous lines, dallying with the Zephyrs, one might have fancied them giant serpents of Syria doing homage to their Sovereign the Sun.

Hand in hand about this valley, for fifteen years, roamed I with Eleonora before Love entered within our hearts. It was one evening at the close of the third lustrum[6] of her life, and of the fourth of my own, that we sat, locked in each other's embrace, beneath the serpent-like trees, and looked down within the waters of the River of Silence at our images therein. We spoke no words during the rest of that sweet day;[7] and our words even upon the morrow were tremulous and few. We had drawn the god Eros[8] from that wave, and now we felt that he had enkindled within us the fiery souls of our forefathers. The passions which had for centuries distinguished our race came thronging with the fancies for which they had been equally noted, and together breathed a delirious bliss over the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass. A change fell upon all things. Strange, brilliant flowers, star-shaped, burst out upon the trees where no flowers had been known before. The tints of the green carpet deepened; and when, one by one, the white daisies shrank away, there sprang up in place of them ten by ten of the ruby-red asphodel. And life arose in our paths; for the tall flamingo, hitherto unseen, with all gay glowing birds, flaunted his scarlet plumage before us. The golden and silver fish haunted the river, out of the bosom of which issued, little by little, a murmur that swelled, at length, into a lulling melody more divine than that of the harp of Æolus[9]—sweeter than all save the voice of Eleonora. And now, too, a voluminous cloud, which we had long watched in the regions of Hesper,[10] floated out thence, all gorgeous in crimson and gold, and, settling in peace above us, sank, day by day, lower and lower, until its edges rested upon the tops of the mountains, turning all their dimness into magnificence, and shutting us up, as if forever, within a magic prison-house of grandeur and of glory.

The loveliness of Eleonora was that of the Seraphim;[11] but she was a maiden artless and innocent as the brief life she had led among the flowers. No guile disguised the fervor of love which animated her heart, and she examined with me its inmost recesses as we walked together in the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass, and discoursed of the mighty changes which had lately taken place therein.

At length, having spoken one day, in tears, of the last sad change which must befall Humanity, she thenceforward dwelt only upon this one sorrowful theme, interweaving it into all our converse, as, in the songs of the bard of Schiraz,[12] the same images are found occurring again and again in every impressive variation of phrase.

She had seen that the finger of Death was upon her bosom—that, like the ephemeron, she had been made perfect in loveliness only to die; but the terrors of the grave to her lay solely in a consideration which she revealed to me one evening at twilight, by the banks of the River of Silence. She grieved to think that, having entombed her in the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass, I would quit forever its happy recesses, transferring the love which now was so passionately her own to some maiden of the outer and every-day world. And then and there I threw myself hurriedly at the feet of Eleonora, and offered up a vow to herself and to Heaven that I would never bind myself in marriage to any daughter of Earth—that I would in no manner prove recreant to her dear memory, or to the memory of the devout affection with which she had blessed me. And I called the Mighty Ruler of the Universe to witness the pious solemnity of my vow. And the curse which I invoked of Him and of her, a saint in Helusion,[13] should I prove traitorous to that promise, involved a penalty the exceeding great horror of which will not permit me to make record of it here. And the bright eyes of Eleonora grew brighter at my words; and she sighed as if a deadly burden had been taken from her breast; and she trembled and very bitterly wept; but she made acceptance of the vow (for what was she but a child?), and it made easy to her the bed of her death. And she said to me, not many days afterwards, tranquilly dying, that, because of what I had done for the comfort of her spirit, she would watch over me in that spirit when departed, and, if so it were permitted her, return to me visibly in the watches of the night; but, if this thing were indeed beyond the power of the souls in Paradise, that she would at least give me frequent indications of her presence; sighing upon me in the evening winds, or filling the air which I breathed with perfume from the censers of the angels. And, with these words upon her lips, she yielded up her innocent life, putting an end to the first epoch of my own.

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[6] Period of five years.

[7] The phrasing is probably suggested by Dante, *Inferno*, v. 138, "That day we read no more."

[8] God of love.

[9] God of winds; cf. "Æolian harp."

[10] The evening star.

[11] Angels of the highest rank.

[12] Probably Hafiz, a Persian poet of the fourteenth century, living at Schiraz.

Thus far I have faithfully said. But as I pass the barrier in Time's path formed by the death of my beloved, and proceed with the second era of my existence, I feel that a shadow gathers over my brain, and I mistrust the perfect sanity of the record. But let me on.—Years dragged themselves along heavily, and still I dwelled within the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass; but a second change had come upon all things. The star-shaped flowers shrank into the stems of the trees, and appeared no more. The tints of the green carpet faded; and, one by one, the ruby-red asphodels withered away; and there sprang up in place of them, ten by ten, dark, eye-like violets, that writhed uneasily and were ever encumbered with dew. And Life departed from our paths; for the tall flamingo flaunted no longer his scarlet plumage before us, but flew sadly from the vale into the hills, with all the gay glowing birds that had arrived in his company. And the golden and silver fish swam down through the gorge at the lower end of our domain, and bedecked the sweet river never again. And the lulling melody that had been softer than the wind-harp of Æolus, and more divine than all save the voice of Eleonora, it died little by little away, in murmurs growing lower and lower, until the stream returned, at length, utterly into the solemnity of its original silence. And then, lastly, the voluminous cloud uprose, and, abandoning the tops of the mountains to the dimness of old, fell back into the regions of Hesper, and took away all its manifold golden and gorgeous glories from the valley of the Many-Colored Grass.

Yet the promises of Eleonora were not forgotten; for I heard the sounds of the swinging of the censers of the angels; and streams of a holy perfume floated ever and ever about the valley; and at lone hours, when my heart beat heavily, the winds that bathed my brow came unto me laden with soft sighs; and indistinct murmurs filled often the night air; and once—oh, but once only! I was awakened from a slumber, like the slumber of death, by the pressing of spiritual lips upon my own.

But the void within my heart refused, even thus, to be filled. I longed for the love which had before filled it to overflowing. At length the valley *pained* me through its memories of Eleonora, and I left it forever for the vanities and the turbulent triumphs of the world.

I found myself within a strange city, where all things might have served to blot from recollection the sweet dreams I had dreamed so long in the Valley of the Many-Colored Grass. The pomps and pageantries of a stately court, and the mad clangor of arms, and the radiant loveliness of woman, bewildered and intoxicated my brain. But as yet my soul had proved true to its vows, and the indications of the presence of Eleonora were still given me in the silent hours of the night. Suddenly these manifestations—they ceased; and the world grew dark before mine eyes; and I stood aghast at the burning thoughts which possessed, at the terrible temptations which beset, me; for there came from some far, far distant and unknown land, into the gay court of the king I served, a maiden to whose beauty my whole recreant heart yielded at once—at whose footstool I bowed down without a struggle, in the most ardent, in the most abject worship of love. What, indeed, was my passion for the young girl of the valley in comparison with the fervor, and the delirium, and the spirit-lifting ecstasy of adoration, with which I poured out my whole soul in tears at the feet of the ethereal Ermengarde? Oh, bright was the seraph Ermengarde! and in that knowledge I had room for none other. Oh, divine was the angel Ermengarde! and as I looked down into the depths of her memorial eyes, I thought only of them—and *of her*.

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[13] Elysium

I wedded;—nor dreaded the curse I had invoked; and its bitterness was not visited upon me. And once—but once again in the silence of the night, there came through my lattice the soft sighs which had forsaken me; and they modeled themselves into familiar and sweet voice, saying:—

"Sleep in peace!—for the Spirit of Love reigneth and ruleth, and, in taking to thy passionate heart her who is Ermengarde, thou art absolved, for reasons which shall be made known to thee in Heaven, of thy vows unto Eleonora."

1842

THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH[1]

(NORTHERN ITALY)

The "Red Death" had long devastated the country. No pestilence had ever been so fatal, or so hideous. Blood was its avatar and its seal—the redness and the horror of blood. There were sharp pains, and sudden dizziness, and then profuse bleeding at the pores, with dissolution. The scarlet stains upon the body, and especially upon the face, of the victim were the pest ban which shut him out from the aid and from the sympathy of his fellow-men. And the whole seizure, progress, and termination of the disease were the incidents of half an hour.

But the Prince Prospero was happy and dauntless and sagacious. When his dominions were half depopulated, he summoned to his presence a thousand hale and light-hearted friends from among the knights and dames of his court, and with these retired to the deep seclusion of one of his castellated abbeys. This was an extensive and magnificent structure, the creation of the Prince's own eccentric yet august taste. A strong and lofty wall girdled it in. This wall had gates of iron. The courtiers, having entered, brought furnaces and massy hammers, and welded the bolts. They resolved to leave means neither of ingress or egress to the sudden impulses of despair or of frenzy from within. The abbey was amply provisioned. With such precautions the courtiers might bid defiance to contagion. The external world could take care of itself. In the mean time it was folly to grieve, or to think. The Prince had provided all the appliances of pleasure. There were buffoons, there were improvisatori,[2] there were ballet-dancers, there were musicians, there was Beauty, there was wine. All these and security were within. Without was the "Red Death."

It was toward the close of the fifth or sixth month of his seclusion, and while the pestilence raged most furiously abroad, that the Prince Prospero entertained his thousand friends at a masked ball of the most unusual magnificence.

It was a voluptuous scene, that masquerade. But first let me tell of the rooms in which it was held. There were seven—an imperial suite. In many palaces, however, such suites form a long and straight vista, while the folding-doors slide back nearly to the walls on either hand, so that the view of the whole extent is scarcely impeded. Here the case was very different, as might have been expected from the Prince's love of the bizarre. The apartments were so irregularly disposed that the vision embraced but little more than one at a time. There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. To the right and left, in the middle of each wall, a tall and narrow Gothic window looked out upon a closed corridor which pursued the windings of the suite. These windows were of stained glass, whose color varied in accordance with the prevailing hue of the decorations of the chamber into which it opened. That at the eastern extremity was hung, for example, in blue—and vividly blue were its windows. The second chamber was purple in its ornaments and tapestries, and here the panes were purple. The third was green throughout, and so were the casements. The fourth was furnished and lighted with orange, the fifth with white, the sixth with violet. The seventh apartment was closely shrouded in black velvet tapestries that hung all over the ceiling and down the walls, falling in heavy folds upon a carpet of the same material and hue. But, in this chamber only, the color of the windows failed to correspond with the decorations. The panes here were scarlet—a deep blood-color. Now in no one of the seven apartments was there any lamp or candelabrum, amid the profusion of golden ornaments that lay scattered to and fro or depended from the roof. There was no light of any kind emanating from lamp or candle within the suite of chambers. But in the corridors that followed the suite there stood, opposite to each window, a heavy tripod, bearing a brazier of fire, that projected its rays through the tinted glass and so glaringly illumined the room. And thus were produced a multitude of gaudy and fantastic appearances. But in the western or black chamber the effect of the firelight that streamed upon the dark hangings through the blood-tinted panes was ghastly in the extreme, and produced so wild a look upon the countenances of those who entered that there were few of the company bold enough to set foot within its precincts at all.

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[1] "In this tale are to be found again all those properties of ultra-Gothic romance of which Poe was the final master. As a work of art it stands quite apart from the more or less famous realistic descriptions of actual pestilence by Boccaccio, Manzoni, Defoe, and Charles Brockden Brown, though at the outset it is not a little like Boccaccio's account (see the *Decameron,* Introduction)." [It is] "allegorical, but without moral significance,—the fear it symbolizes is purely physical. But this is another of Poe's most successful fantasies, at once gorgeous and spectral, ridiculously impossible, yet awfully real." *Poems and Tales of Edgar Allan Poe,* edited by Alphonso G. Newcomer, *The Lake English Classics.*

[2] Those who improvise: poets.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood against the western wall a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and when the minute-hand made the circuit of the face, and the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause, momentarily, in their performance, to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions; and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused revery or meditation. But when the echoes had fully ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly; the musicians looked at each other and smiled as if at their own nervousness and folly, and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion; and then, after the lapse of sixty minutes (which embrace three thousand and six hundred seconds of the Time that flies) there came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and tremulousness and meditation as before.

But, in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel. The tastes of the Prince were peculiar. He had a fine eye for colors and effects. He disregarded the *decora* of mere fashion. His plans were bold and fiery, and his conceptions glowed with barbaric luster. There are some who would have thought him mad. His followers felt that he was not. It was necessary to hear and see and touch him to be *sure* that he was not.

He had directed, in great part, the movable embellishments of the seven chambers, upon occasion of this great *fête;* and it was his own guiding taste which had given character to the masqueraders. Be sure they were grotesque. There were much glare and glitter and piquancy and phantasm—much of what has been since seen in *Hernani*.[8] There were arabesque figures with unsuited limbs and appointments. There were delirious fancies such as the madman fashions. There was much of the beautiful, much of the wanton, much of the bizarre, something of the terrible, and not a little of that which might have excited disgust. To and fro in the seven chambers there stalked, in fact, a multitude of dreams. And these—the dreams—writhed in and about, taking hue from the rooms, and causing the wild music of the orchestra to seem as the echo of their steps. And, anon, there strikes the ebony clock which stands in the hall of the velvet. And then, for a moment, all is still, and all is silent save the voice of the clock. The dreams are stiff-frozen as they stand. But the echoes of the chime die away—they have endured but an instant—and a light, half-subdued laughter floats after them as they depart. And now again the music swells, and the dreams live, and writhe to and fro more merrily than ever, taking hue from the many tinted windows through which stream the rays from the tripods. But to the chamber which lies most westwardly of the seven, there are now none of the maskers who venture; for the night is waning away, and there flows a ruddier light through the blood-colored panes; and the blackness of the sable drapery appalls; and to him whose foot falls upon the sable carpet, there comes from the near clock of ebony a muffled peal more solemnly emphatic than any which reaches *their* ears who indulge in the more remote gayeties of the other apartments.

But these other apartments were densely

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[8] A tragedy by Victor Hugo, 1830: the beginning of the modern romantic drama in France.

crowded, and in them beat feverishly the heart of life. And the revel went whirlingly on, until at length there commenced the sounding of midnight upon the clock. And then the music ceased, as I have told; and the evolutions of the waltzers were quieted; and there was an uneasy cessation of all things as before. But now there were twelve strokes to be sounded by the bell of the clock; and thus it happened, perhaps, that more of thought crept, with more of time, into the meditations of the thoughtful among those who reveled. And thus, too, it happened, perhaps, that before the last echoes of the last chime had utterly sunk into silence, there were many individuals in the crowd who had found leisure to become aware of the presence of a masked figure which had arrested the attention of no single individual before. And the rumor of this new presence having spread itself whisperingly around, there arose at length from the whole company a buzz, or murmur, expressive of disapprobation and surprise—then, finally, of terror, of horror, and of disgust.

In an assembly of phantasms such as I have painted, it may well be supposed that no ordinary appearance could have excited such sensation. In truth the masquerade license of the night was nearly unlimited; but the figure in question had out-Heroded Herod, and gone beyond the bounds of even the Prince's indefinite decorum. There are chords in the hearts of the most reckless which cannot be touched without emotion. Even with the utterly lost, to whom life and death are equally jests, there are matters of which no jest can be made. The whole company, indeed, seemed now deeply to feel that in the costume and bearing of the stranger neither wit nor propriety existed. The figure was tall and gaunt, and shrouded from head to foot in the habiliments of the grave. The mask which concealed the visage was made so nearly to resemble the countenance of a stiffened corpse that the closest scrutiny must have had difficulty in detecting the cheat. And yet all this might have been endured, if not approved, by the mad revelers around. But the mummer had gone so far as to assume the type of the Red Death. His vesture was dabbled in *blood*—and his broad brow, with all the features of the face, was besprinkled with the scarlet horror.

When the eyes of Prince Prospero fell upon this spectral image (which with a slow and solemn movement, as if more fully to sustain its *rôle,* stalked to and fro among the waltzers) he was seen to be convulsed, in the first moment, with a strong shudder either of terror or distaste; but, in the next, his brow reddened with rage.

"Who dares?" he demanded hoarsely of the courtiers who stood near him—"who dares insult us with this blasphemous mockery? Seize him and unmask him—that we may know whom we have to hang at sunrise, from the battlements!"

It was in the eastern or blue chamber in which stood the Prince Prospero as he uttered these words. They rang throughout the seven rooms loudly and clearly—for the Prince was a bold and robust man, and the music had become hushed at the waving of his hand.

It was in the blue room where stood the Prince, with a group of pale courtiers by his side. At first, as he spoke, there was a slight rushing movement of this group in the direction of the intruder, who at the moment was also near at hand, and now, with deliberate and stately step, made closer approach to the speaker. But from a certain nameless awe with which the mad assumptions of the mummer had inspired the whole party, there were found none who put forth hand to seize him; so that, unimpeded, he passed within a yard of the Prince's person; and while the vast assembly, as if with one impulse, shrank from the centers of the rooms to the walls, he made his way uninterruptedly, but with the same solemn and measured step which had distinguished him from the first, through the blue chamber to the purple—through the purple to the green—through the green to the orange—through this again to the white—and even thence to the violet, ere a decided movement had been made to arrest him. It was then, however, that the Prince Prospero, maddening with rage and the shame of his own momentary cowardice, rushed hurriedly through the six chambers, while none followed him, on account of a deadly terror that had seized upon all. He bore aloft a drawn dagger, and had approached, in rapid impetuosity, to within three or four feet of the retreating figure, when the latter, having attained the extremity of the velvet apartment, turned suddenly and confronted his pursuer. There was a sharp cry—and the dagger dropped gleaming upon the sable carpet, upon which, instantly afterwards, fell prostrate in death the Prince Prospero. Then, summoning the wild courage of despair, a throng of the revelers at once threw themselves into the black apartment, and, seizing the mummer, whose tall figure stood erect and motionless within the shadow of the ebony clock, gasped in unutterable horror at finding the grave cerements and corpse-like mask, which they handled with so violent a rudeness, untenanted by any tangible form.

And now was acknowledged the presence of the Red Death. He had come like a thief in the night. And one by one dropped the revelers in the blood-bedewed halls of their revel, and died each in the despairing posture of his fall. And the life of the ebony clock went out with that of the last of the gay. And the flames of the tripods expired. And Darkness and Decay and the Red Death held illimitable dominion over all.

1845

THE PURLOINED LETTER[1]

Nil sapientiæ odiosius acumine nimio.[2]
SENECA.

At Paris, just after dark one gusty evening in the autumn of 18—, I was enjoying the twofold luxury of meditation and a meerschaum, in company with my friend, C. Auguste Dupin, in his little back library, or book closet, *au troisième*,[3] No. 33 Rue Dunôt, Faubourg St. Germain. For one hour at least we had maintained a profound silence; while each, to any casual observer, might have seemed intently and exclusively occupied with the curling eddies of smoke that oppressed the atmosphere of the chamber. For myself, however, I was mentally discussing certain topics which had formed matter for conversation between us at an earlier period of the evening; I mean the affair of the Rue Morgue, and the mystery attending the murder of Marie Rogêt. I looked upon it, therefore, as something of a coincidence, when the door of our apartment was thrown open and admitted our old acquaintance, Monsieur G—, the Prefect of the Parisian police.

We gave him a hearty welcome; for there was nearly half as much of the entertaining as of the contemptible about the man, and we had not seen him for several years. We had been sitting in the dark, and Dupin now arose for the purpose of lighting a lamp, but sat down again, without doing so, upon G——'s saying that he had called to consult us, or rather to ask the opinion of my friend, about some official business which had occasioned a great deal of trouble.

"If it is any point requiring reflection," observed Dupin, as he forbore to enkindle the wick, "we shall examine it to better purpose in the dark."

"That is another of your odd notions," said the Prefect, who had a fashion of calling everything "odd" that was beyond his comprehension, and thus lived amid an absolute legion of "oddities."

"Very true," said Dupin, as he supplied his visitor with a pipe, and rolled towards him a comfortable chair.

"And what is the difficulty now?" I asked. "Nothing more in the assassination way, I hope?"

"Oh, no; nothing of that nature. The fact is, the business is *very* simple indeed, and I make no doubt that we can manage it sufficiently well ourselves; but then I thought Dupin would like to hear the details of it, because it is so excessively *odd*."

"Simple and odd," said Dupin.

"Why, yes; and not exactly that, either. The fact is, we have all been a good deal puzzled because the affair *is* so simple, and yet baffles us altogether."

"Perhaps it is the very simplicity of the thing which puts you at fault," said my friend.

"What nonsense you *do* talk!" replied the Prefect, laughing heartily.

"Perhaps the mystery is a little *too* plain," said Dupin.

"Oh, good heavens! who ever heard of such an idea?"

"A little *too* self evident."

"Ha! ha! ha!—ha! ha! ha!—ho! ho! ho!" roared our visitor, profoundly amused, "oh, Dupin, you will be the death of me yet!"

"And what, after all, *is* the matter on hand?" I asked.

"Why, I will tell you," replied the Prefect, as he gave a long, steady, and contemplative puff, and settled himself in his chair. "I will tell you in a few words; but, before I begin, let me caution you that this is an affair demanding the greatest secrecy, and that I should most probably lose the position I now hold were it known that I confided it to any one."

"Proceed," said I.

"Or not," said Dupin.

"Well, then; I have received personal information from a very high quarter that a certain document of the last importance has been purloined from the royal apartments.

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[1] One realm of Poe's genius was that of logical or psychological analysis. *The Gold Bug, The Murders in the Rue Morgue, The Mystery of Marie Rogêt,* and the present tale belong to this class. This type of fiction lies close to journalism, which was, indeed, Poe's occupation, and in the hands of a person of less skill and creative power degenerates into the ordinary detective story.

[2] Nothing more hateful to wisdom than over-acuteness.

[3] On the third floor, really the fourth, since the first, usually occupied in Paris by shops, is not counted.

The individual who purloined it is known; this beyond a doubt; he was seen to take it. It is known, also, that it still remains in his possession."

"How is this known?" asked Dupin.

"It is clearly inferred," replied the Prefect, "from the nature of the document, and from the non-appearance of certain results which would at once arise from its passing *out* of the robber's possession; that is to say, from his employing it as he must design in the end to employ it."

"Be a little more explicit," I said.

"Well, I may venture so far as to say that the paper gives its holder a certain power in a certain quarter where such power is immensely valuable." The Prefect was fond of the cant of diplomacy.

"Still I do not quite understand," said Dupin.

"No? Well; the disclosure of the document to a third person, who shall be nameless, would bring in question the honor of a personage of most exalted station; and this fact gives the holder of the document an ascendancy over the illustrious personage whose honor and peace are so jeopardized."

"But this ascendancy," I interposed, "would depend upon the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge of the robber. Who would dare"—

"The thief," said G——, "is the Minister D——, who dares all things, those unbecoming as well as those becoming a man. The method of the theft was not less ingenious than bold. The document in question—a letter, to be frank—had been received by the personage robbed while alone in the royal *boudoir*. During its perusal she was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of the other exalted personage, from whom especially it was her wish to conceal it. After a hurried and vain endeavor to thrust it in a drawer, she was forced to place it, open as it was, upon a table. The address, however, was uppermost, and, the contents thus unexposed, the letter escaped notice. At this juncture enters the Minister D——. His lynx eye immediately perceives the paper, recognizes the handwriting of the address, observes the confusion of the personage addressed, and fathoms her secret. After some business transactions, hurried through in his ordinary manner, he produces a letter somewhat similar to the one in question, opens it, pretends to read it, and then places it in close juxtaposition to the other. Again he converses for some fifteen minutes upon the public affairs. At length in taking leave he takes also from the table the letter to which he had no claim. Its rightful owner saw, but of course dared not call attention to the act, in the presence of the third personage, who stood at her elbow. The Minister decamped, leaving his own letter—one of no importance—upon the table."

"Here, then," said Dupin to me, "you have precisely what you demand to make the ascendancy complete—the robber's knowledge of the loser's knowledge of the robber."

"Yes," replied the Prefect; "and the power thus attained has, for some months past, been wielded, for political purposes, to a very dangerous extent. The personage robbed is more thoroughly convinced, every day, of the necessity of reclaiming her letter. But this, of course, cannot be done openly. In fine, driven to despair, she has committed the matter to me."

"Than whom," said Dupin, amid a perfect whirlwind of smoke, "no more sagacious agent could, I suppose, be desired, or even imagined."

"You flatter me," replied the Prefect; "but it is possible that some such opinion may have been entertained."

"It is clear," said I, "as you observe, that the letter is still in possession of the Minister; since it is this possession, and not any employment of the letter, which bestows the power. With the employment the power departs."

"True," said G——; "and upon this conviction I proceeded. My first care was to make thorough search of the Minister's Hotel;[4] and here my chief embarrassment lay in the necessity of searching without his knowledge. Beyond all things, I have been warned of the danger which would result from giving him reason to suspect our design."

"But," said I, "you are quite *au fait*[5] in these investigations. The Parisian police have done this thing often before."

"Oh, yes; and for this reason I did not despair. The habits of the Minister gave me, too, a great advantage. He is frequently absent from home all night. His servants are by no means numerous. They sleep at a distance from their master's apartment, and, being chiefly Neapolitans, are readily made drunk. I have keys, as you know, with which I can open any chamber or cabinet in Paris. For three months a night has not passed, during the greater part of which I have not been engaged, personally, in ransacking the D—— Hotel. My honor is in-

[4] residence, mansion

[5] expert

terested, and, to mention a great secret, the reward is enormous. So I did not abandon the search until I had become fully satisfied that the thief is a more astute man than myself. I fancy that I have investigated every nook and corner of the premises in which it is possible that the paper can be concealed."

"But is it not possible," I suggested, "that although the letter may be in possession of the Minister, as it unquestionably is, he may have concealed it elsewhere than upon his own premises?"

"This is barely possible," said Dupin. "The present peculiar condition of affairs at court, and especially of those intrigues in which D—— is known to be involved, would render the instant availability of the document—its susceptibility of being produced at a moment's notice—a point of nearly equal importance with its possession."

"Its susceptibility of being produced?" said I.

"That is to say, of being *destroyed*," said Dupin.

"True," I observed; "the paper is clearly then upon the premises. As for its being upon the person of the Minister, we may consider that as out of the question."

"Entirely," said the Prefect. "He has been twice waylaid, as if by footpads, and his person rigorously searched under my own inspection."

"You might have spared yourself this trouble," said Dupin. "D——, I presume, is not altogether a fool, and, if not, must have anticipated these waylayings as a matter of course."

"Not *altogether* a fool," said G——, "but then he's a poet, which I take to be only one remove from a fool."

"True," said Dupin, after a long and thoughtful whiff from his meerschaum, "although I have been guilty of certain doggerel myself."

"Suppose you detail," said I, "the particulars of your search."

"Why, the fact is, we took our time, and we searched *everywhere*. I have had long experience in these affairs. I took the entire building, room by room, devoting the nights of a whole week to each. We examined, first, the furniture of each apartment. We opened every possible drawer; and I presume you know that, to a properly trained police agent, such a thing as a *secret* drawer is impossible. Any man is a dolt who permits a 'secret' drawer to escape him in a search of this kind. The thing is *so* plain. There is a certain amount of bulk—of space—to be accounted for in every cabinet. Then we have accurate rules. The fiftieth part of a line could not escape us. After the cabinets we took the chairs. The cushions we probed with the fine long needles you have seen me employ. From the tables we removed the tops."

"Why so?"

"Sometimes the top of a table, or other similarly arranged piece of furniture, is removed by the person wishing to conceal an article; then the leg is excavated, the article deposited within the cavity, and the top replaced. The bottoms and tops of bed-posts are employed in the same way."

"But could not the cavity be detected by sounding?" I asked.

"By no means, if, when the article is deposited, a sufficient wadding of cotton be placed around it. Besides, in our case we were obliged to proceed without noise."

"But you could not have removed—you could not have taken to pieces *all* articles of furniture in which it would have been possible to make a deposit in the manner you mention. A letter may be compressed into a thin spiral roll, not differing much in shape or bulk from a large knitting-needle, and in this form it might be inserted into the rung of a chair, for example. You did not take to pieces all the chairs?"

"Certainly not; but we did better—we examined the rungs of every chair in the Hotel, and indeed, the jointings of every description of furniture, by the aid of a most powerful microscope. Had there been any traces of recent disturbance we should not have failed to detect it instantly. A single grain of gimlet-dust, for example, would have been as obvious as an apple. Any disorder in the gluing—any unusual gaping in the joints—would have sufficed to insure detection."

"I presume you looked to the mirrors, between the boards and the plates, and you probed the beds and the bedclothes, as well as the curtains and carpets?"

"That, of course; and when we had absolutely completed every particle of the furniture in this way, then we examined the house itself. We divided its entire surface into compartments, which we numbered, so that none might be missed; then we scrutinized each individual square inch throughout the premises, including the two houses immediately adjoining, with the microscope, as before."

"The two houses adjoining!" I exclaimed; "you must have had a great deal of trouble."

"We had; but the reward offered is prodigious."

"You include the *grounds* about the houses?"

"All the grounds are paved with brick. They gave us comparatively little trouble. We examined the moss between the bricks, and found it undisturbed."

"You looked among D——'s papers, of course, and into the books of the library?"

"Certainly; we opened every package and parcel; we not only opened every book, but we turned over every leaf in each volume, not contenting ourselves with a mere shake, according to the fashion of some of our police officers. We also measured the thickness of every book-*cover*, with the most accurate admeasurement,[6] and applied to each the most jealous scrutiny of the microscope. Had any of the bindings been recently meddled with, it would have been utterly impossible that the fact should have escaped observation. Some five or six volumes, just from the hands of the binder, we carefully probed, longitudinally, with the needles."

"You explored the floors beneath the carpets?"

"Beyond doubt. We removed every carpet, and examined the boards with the microscope."

"And the paper on the walls?"

"Yes."

"You looked into the cellars?"

"We did."

"Then," I said, "you have been making a miscalculation, and the letter is *not* upon the premises, as you suppose."

"I fear you are right there," said the Prefect. "And now, Dupin, what would you advise me to do?"

"To make a thorough re-search of the premises."

"That is absolutely needless," replied G——. "I am not more sure that I breathe than I am that the letter is not at the Hotel."

"I have no better advice to give you," said Dupin. "You have, of course, an accurate description of the letter?"

"Oh, yes!"—And here the Prefect, producing a memorandum-book, proceeded to read aloud a minute account of the internal, and especially of the external appearance of the missing document. Soon after finishing the perusal of this description, he took his departure, more entirely depressed in spirits than I had ever known the good gentleman before.

In about a month afterwards he paid us another visit, and found us occupied very nearly as before. He took a pipe and a chair, and entered into some ordinary conversation. At length I said,—

"Well, but G——, what of the purloined letter? I presume you have at last made up your mind that there is no such thing as overreaching the Minister?"

"Confound him, say I—yes; I made the reexamination, however, as Dupin suggested—but it was all labor lost, as I knew it would be."

"How much was the reward offered, did you say?" asked Dupin.

"Why, a very great deal—a *very* liberal reward—I don't like to say how much precisely; but one thing I *will* say, that I wouldn't mind giving my individual check for fifty thousand francs to any one who could obtain me that letter. The fact is, it is becoming of more and more importance every day; and the reward has been lately doubled. If it were trebled, however, I could do no more than I have done."

"Why, yes," said Dupin, drawlingly, between the whiffs of his meerschaum, "I really—think, G——, you have not exerted yourself—to the utmost in this matter. You might—do a little more, I think, eh?"

"How?—in what way?"

"Why—puff, puff—you might—puff, puff—employ counsel in the matter, eh?—puff, puff, puff—Do you remember the story they tell of Abernethy?"[7]

"No; hang Abernethy!"

"To be sure! hang him and welcome. But, once upon a time, a certain rich miser conceived the design of sponging upon this Abernethy for a medical opinion. Getting up, for this purpose, an ordinary conversation in a private company, he insinuated his case to the physician, as that of an imaginary individual.

"'We will suppose,' said the miser, 'that his symptoms are such and such; now, doctor, what would *you* have directed him to take?'

"'Take!' said Abernethy, 'why, take *advice*, to be sure.'"

"But," said the Prefect, a little discomposed, "*I* am *perfectly* willing to take advice, and to pay for it. I would *really* give fifty thousand francs to any one who would aid me in the matter."

"In that case," replied Dupin, opening a drawer, and producing a check-book, "you may as well fill me up a check for the amount mentioned. When you have signed it, I will hand you the letter."

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[6] Measurement that determines the proper or the comparative size.

[7] A celebrated and rather eccentric English surgeon. 1764-1831.

I was astounded. The Prefect appeared absolutely thunderstricken. For some minutes he remained speechless and motionless, looking incredulously at my friend with open mouth, and eyes that seemed starting from their sockets; then, apparently recovering himself in some measure, he seized a pen, and after several pauses and vacant stares, finally filled up and signed a check for fifty thousand francs, and handed it across the table to Dupin. The latter examined it carefully and deposited it in his pocketbook; then, unlocking an escritoire, took thence a letter and gave it to the Prefect. This functionary grasped it in a perfect agony of joy, opened it with a trembling hand, cast a rapid glance at its contents, and then, scrambling and struggling to the door, rushed at length unceremoniously from the room and from the house, without having uttered a syllable since Dupin had requested him to fill up the check.

When he had gone, my friend entered into some explanations.

"The Parisian police," he said, "are exceedingly able in their way. They are persevering, ingenious, cunning, and thoroughly versed in the knowledge which their duties seem chiefly to demand. Thus, when G—— detailed to us his mode of searching the premises at the Hotel D——, I felt entire confidence in his having made a satisfactory investigation—so far as his labors extended."

"So far as his labors extended?" said I.

"Yes," said Dupin. "The measures adopted were not only the best of their kind, but carried out to absolute perfection. Had the letter been deposited within the range of their search, these fellows would, beyond a question, have found it."

I merely laughed—but he seemed quite serious in all that he said.

"The measures, then," he continued, "were good in their kind, and well executed; their defect lay in their being inapplicable to the case, and to the man. A certain set of highly ingenious resources are, with the Prefect, a sort of Procrustean[8] bed to which he forcibly adapts his designs. But he perpetually errs by being too deep or too shallow, for the matter in hand; and many a schoolboy is a better reasoner than he. I knew one about eight years of age, whose success at guessing in the game of 'even and odd' attracted universal admiration. This game is simple, and is played with marbles. One player holds in his hand a number of these toys, and demands of another whether that number is even or odd. If the guess is right, the guesser wins one; if wrong, he loses one. The boy to whom I allude won all the marbles of the school. Of course he had some principle of guessing; and this lay in mere observation and admeasurement of the astuteness of his opponents. For example, an arrant simpleton is his opponent, and, holding up his closed hand, asks, 'Are they even or odd?' Our schoolboy replies, 'Odd,' and loses; but upon the second trial he wins, for he then says to himself, 'The simpleton had them even upon the first trial, and his amount of cunning is just sufficient to make him have them odd upon the second; I will therefore guess odd;' he guesses odd, and wins. Now, with a simpleton a degree above the first he would have reasoned thus: 'This fellow finds that in the first instance I guessed odd, and in the second he will propose to himself, upon the first impulse, a simple variation from even to odd, as did the first simpleton; but then a second thought will suggest that this is too simple a variation, and finally he will decide upon putting it even as before. I will therefore guess even'; he guesses even, and wins. Now, this mode of reasoning in the schoolboy, whom his fellows termed 'lucky'—what, in its last analysis, is it?"

"It is merely," I said, "an identification of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent."

"It is," said Dupin; "and, upon inquiring of the boy by what means he effected the *thorough* identification in which his success consisted, I received answer as follows: 'When I wish to find out how wise, or how stupid, or how good, or how wicked is any one, or what are his thoughts at the moment, I fashion the expression of my face, as accurately as possible, in accordance with the expression of his, and then wait to see what thoughts or sentiments arise in my mind or heart, as if to match or correspond with the expression.' This response of the schoolboy lies at the bottom of all the spurious profundity which has been attributed to Rochefoucauld, to La Bruyère, to Machiavelli, and to Campanella."[9]

"And the identification," I said, "of the reasoner's intellect with that of his opponent, depends, if I understand you aright, upon the accuracy with which the opponent's intellect is admeasured."

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[8] Procrustes, a legendary Attic robber, tortured his victims by stretching or lopping them to fit a certain bed.

[9] Rochefoucauld and La Bruyère, French moralists of the seventeenth century; Machiavelli, an Italian statesman of the sixteenth century, celebrated for his open cynicism concerning the morals of statecraft; Campanella, a seventeenth century Italian philosopher.

"For its practical value it depends upon this," replied Dupin, "and the Prefect and his cohort fail so frequently, first, by default of this identification, and secondly, by ill-admeasurement, or rather through non-admeasurement, of the intellect with which they are engaged. They consider only their *own* ideas of ingenuity; and, in searching for anything hidden, advert only to the modes in which *they* would have hidden it. They are right in this much—that their own ingenuity is a faithful representative of that of *the mass*: but when the cunning of the individual felon is diverse in character from their own, the felon foils them, of course. This always happens when it is above their own, and very usually when it is below. They have no variation of principle in their investigations; at best, when urged by some unusual emergency—by some extraordinary reward—they extend or exaggerate their old modes of *practice,* without touching their principles. What, for example, in this case of D——, has been done to vary the principle of action? What is all this boring, and probing, and sounding, and scrutinizing with the microscope, and dividing the surface of the building into registered square inches—what is it all but an exaggeration *of the application* of the one principle or set of principles of search, which are based upon the one set of notions regarding human ingenuity, to which the Prefect, in the long routine of his duty, has been accustomed? Do you not see he has taken it for granted that *all* men proceed to conceal a letter,—not exactly in a gimlet-hole bored in a chair-leg—but, at least, in *some* out-of-the-way hole or corner suggested by the same tenor of thought which would urge a man to secrete a letter in a gimlet-hole bored in a chair leg? And do you not see, also, that such *recherchés*[10] nooks for concealment are adapted only for ordinary occasions and would be adopted only by ordinary intellects; for, in all cases of concealment, a disposal of the article concealed—a disposal of it in this *recherché* manner—is, in the very first instance, presumable and presumed; and thus its discovery depends, not at all upon the acumen, but altogether upon the mere care, patience, and determination of the seekers; and where the case is of importance—or, what amounts to the same thing in the policial eyes, when the reward is of magnitude—the qualities in question have *never* been known to fail. You will now understand what I meant in suggesting that, had the purloined letter been hidden anywhere within the limits of the Prefect's examination—in other words, had the principle of its concealment been comprehended within the principles of the Prefect—its discovery would have been a matter altogether beyond question. This functionary, however, has been thoroughly mystified; and the remote source of his defeat lies in the supposition that the Minister is a fool because he has acquired renown as a poet. All fools are poets; this the Prefect *feels*; and he is merely guilty of a *non distributio medii*[11] in thence inferring that all poets are fools."

"But is this really the poet?" I asked. "There are two brothers, I know; and both have attained reputation in letters. The Minister, I believe, has written learnedly on the Differential Calculus. He is a mathematician and no poet."

"You are mistaken; I know him well; he is both. As poet *and* mathematician he would reason well; as mere mathematician he could not have reasoned at all, and thus would have been at the mercy of the Prefect."

"You surprise me," I said, "by these opinions, which have been contradicted by the voice of the world. You do not mean to set at naught the well-digested idea of centuries. The mathematical reason has long been regarded as *the* reason *par excellence*."[12]

"'*Il y a à parier*,'" replied Dupin, quoting from Chamfort, "'*que toute idée publique, toute convention reçue, est une sottise, car elle a convenu au plus grand nombre.*'[13] The mathematicians, I grant you, have done their best to promulgate the popular error to which you allude, and which is none the less an error for its promulgation as truth. With an art worthy a better cause, for example, they have insinuated the term 'analysis' into application to algebra. The French are the originators of this particular deception; but if a term is of any importance—if words derive any value from applicability—then 'analysis' conveys 'algebra,' about as much as, in Latin, '*ambitus*' implies 'ambition,' '*religio*,' 'religion,' or '*homines honesti*,' a set of honorable men."[14]

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[10] carefully sought out, hidden

[11] Undistributed middle term (of a logical syllogism), causing a fallacious conclusion.

[12] above all

[13] "It is safe to wager that every common notion, every received convention, is a piece of stupidity, since it has found favor with the majority." Nicholas Chamfort, 1741-1794, was a French writer of maxims.

[14] *Ambitus* really means "a going round, office-seeking"; *religio* may mean "punctiliousness," and *homines honesti,* "distinguished men."

"You have a quarrel on hand, I see," said I, "with some of the algebraists of Paris; but proceed."

"I dispute the availability, and thus the value of that reason which is cultivated in any especial form other than the abstractly logical. I dispute, in particular, the reason educed by mathematical study. The mathematics are the science of form and quantity; mathematical reasoning is merely logic applied to observation upon form and quantity. The great error lies in supposing that even the truths of what is called *pure* algebra are abstract or general truths. And this error is so egregious that I am confounded at the universality with which it has been received. Mathematical axioms are *not* axioms of general truth. What is true of *relation*—of form and quantity—is often grossly false in regard to morals, for example. In this latter science it is very usually *un*true that the aggregated parts are equal to the whole. In chemistry, also, the axiom fails. In the consideration of motive it fails; for two motives, each of a given value, have not, necessarily, a value when united equal to the sum of their values apart. There are numerous other mathematical truths which are only truths within the limits of *relation*. But the mathematician argues, from his *finite truths*, through habit, as if they were of an absolutely general applicability—as the world indeed imagines them to be. Bryant,[15] in his very learned '*Mythology*,' mentions an analogous source of error, when he says that 'although the Pagan fables are not believed, yet we forget ourselves continually, and make inferences from them as existing realities.' With the algebraists, however, who are Pagans themselves, the 'Pagan fables' *are* believed and the inferences are made, not so much through lapse of memory as through an unaccountable addling of the brains. In short I never yet encountered the mere mathematician who could be trusted out of equal roots, or one who did not clandestinely hold it as a point of his faith that x^2+px was absolutely and unconditionally equal to q. Say to one of these gentlemen, by way of experiment, if you please, that you believe occasions may occur where x^2+px is *not* altogether equal to q, and, having made him understand what you mean, get out of his reach as speedily as convenient, for, beyond doubt, he will endeavor to knock you down.

"I mean to say," continued Dupin, while I merely laughed at his last observations, "that if the Minister had been no more than a mathematician, the Prefect would have been under no necessity of giving me this check. I knew him, however, as both mathematician and poet, and my measures were adapted to his capacity with reference to the circumstances by which he was surrounded. I knew him as courtier, too, and as a bold *intriguant*.[16] Such a man, I considered, could not fail to be aware of the ordinary policial modes of action. He could not have failed to anticipate—and events have proved that he did not fail to anticipate—the waylayings to which he was subjected. He must have foreseen, I reflected, the secret investigations of his premises. His frequent absences from home at night, which were hailed by the Prefect as certain aids to his success, I regarded only as ruses, to afford opportunity for thorough search to the police, and thus the sooner to impress them with the conviction to which G——, in fact, did finally arrive,—the conviction that the letter was not upon the premises. I felt, also, that the whole train of thought, which I was at some pains in detailing to you just now, concerning the invariable principle of policial action in searches for articles concealed—I felt that this whole train of thought would necessarily pass through the mind of the Minister. It would imperatively lead him to despise all the ordinary *nooks* of concealment. *He* could not, I reflected, be so weak as not to see that the most intricate and remote recess of his Hotel would be as open as his commonest closets to the eyes, to the probes, to the gimlets, and to the microscopes of the Prefect. I saw, in fine, that he would be driven, as a matter of course, to *simplicity*, if not deliberately induced to it as a matter of choice. You will remember, perhaps, how desperately the Prefect laughed when I suggested, upon our first interview, that it was just possible this mystery troubled him so much on account of its being so *very* self-evident."

"Yes," said I, "I remember his merriment well. I really thought he would have fallen into convulsions."

"The material world," continued Dupin, "abounds with very strict analogies to the immaterial; and thus some color of truth has been given to the rhetorical dogma, that metaphor, or simile, may be made to strengthen an argument, as well as to embellish a description. The principle of the *vis inertiæ*,[17] for example, seems to be identical in physics and metaphysics. It is not more true in the former, that a large body is with more difficulty set in motion than a smaller one, and that its subsequent momentum is commensurate with this difficulty, than it is, in the latter, that intellects of the vaster capacity, while more forcible, more constant, and more eventful in their movements than those of inferior grade, are yet the less readily moved, and more embarrassed and full of hesitation in the first few steps of their progress. Again: have you ever noticed which of the street signs over the shop doors are the most attractive of attention?"

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[15] Jacob Bryant, 1715-1804, an English antiquary.

[16] intriguer

[17] force of inertia

"I have never given the matter a thought," I said.

"There is a game of puzzles," he resumed, "which is played upon a map. One party playing requires another to find a given word,—the name of town, river, state, or empire,—any word, in short, upon the motley and perplexed surface of the chart. A novice in the game generally seeks to embarrass his opponents by giving them the most minutely lettered names; but the adept selects such words as stretch in large characters, from one end of the chart to the other. These, like the over-largely lettered signs and placards of the street, escape observation by dint of being excessively obvious; and here the physical oversight is precisely analogous with the moral inapprehension by which the intellect suffers to pass unnoticed those considerations which are too obtrusively and too palpably self-evident. But this is a point, it appears, somewhat above or beneath the understanding of the Prefect. He never once thought it probable, or possible, that the Minister had deposited the letter immediately beneath the nose of the whole world by way of best preventing any portion of that world from perceiving it.

"But the more I reflected upon the daring, dashing, and discriminating ingenuity of D——; upon the fact that the document must always have been *at hand,* if he intended to use it to good purpose; and upon the decisive evidence, obtained by the Prefect, that it was not hidden within the limits of that dignitary's ordinary search—the more satisfied I became that, to conceal this letter, the Minister had resorted to the comprehensive and sagacious expedient of not attempting to conceal it at all.

"Full of these ideas, I prepared myself with a pair of green spectacles, and called one fine morning, quite by accident, at the Ministerial Hotel. I found D—— at home, yawning, lounging, and dawdling, as usual, and pretending to be in the last extremity of *ennui.*[18] He is, perhaps, the most really energetic human being now alive—but that is only when nobody sees him.

"To be even with him, I complained of my weak eyes, and lamented the necessity of the spectacles, under cover of which I cautiously and thoroughly surveyed the whole apartment, while seemingly intent only upon the conversation of my host.

"I paid especial attention to a large writing-table near which he sat, and upon which lay confusedly some miscellaneous letters and other papers, with one or two musical instruments and a few books. Here, however, after a long and very deliberate scrutiny, I saw nothing to excite particular suspicion.

"At length my eyes, in going the circuit of the room, fell upon a trumpery filigree card-rack of paste-board, that hung, dangling, by a dirty blue ribbon, from a little brass knob just beneath the middle of the mantelpiece. In this rack, which had three or four compartments, were five or six visiting cards and a solitary letter. This last was much soiled and crumpled. It was torn nearly in two, across the middle—as if a design, in the first instance, to tear it entirely up as worthless had been altered, or stayed, in the second. It had a large black seal, bearing the D—— cipher *very* conspicuously, and was addressed, in a diminutive female hand, to D——, the Minister himself. It was thrust carelessly, and even, as it seemed, contemptuously, into one of the upper divisions of the rack.

"No sooner had I glanced at this letter than I concluded it to be that of which I was in search. To be sure, it was, to all appearance, radically different from the one of which the Prefect had read us so minute a description. Here the seal was large and black, with the D—— cipher; there it was small and red, with the ducal arms of the S—— family. Here, the address, to the Minister, was diminutive and feminine; there, the superscription, to a certain royal personage, was markedly bold and decided; the size alone formed a point of correspondence. But, then, the *radicalness* of these differences, which was excessive; the dirt; the soiled and torn condition of the paper, so inconsistent with the *true* methodical habits of D——, and so suggestive of a design to delude the beholder into an idea of the worthlessness of the document; these things, together with the hyper-obtrusive situation of

[18] boredom

this document, full in the view of every visitor, and thus exactly in accordance with the conclusions to which I had previously arrived; these things, I say, were strongly corroborative of suspicion, in one who came with the intention to suspect.

"I protracted my visit as long as possible, and while I maintained a most animated discussion with the Minister, upon a topic which I knew well had never failed to interest and excite him, I kept my attention really riveted upon the letter. In this examination, I committed to memory its external appearance and arrangement in the rack; and also fell, at length, upon a discovery which set at rest whatever trivial doubt I might have entertained. In scrutinizing the edges of the paper, I observed them to be more *chafed* than seemed necessary. They presented the *broken* appearance which is manifested when a stiff paper, having been once folded and pressed with a folder, is refolded in a reversed direction, in the same creases or edges which had formed the original fold. This discovery was sufficient. It was clear to me that the letter had been turned, as a glove, inside out, re-directed, and re-sealed. I bade the Minister good-morning, and took my departure at once, leaving a gold snuff-box upon the table.

"The next morning I called for the snuff-box, when we resumed, quite eagerly, the conversation of the preceding day. While thus engaged, however, a loud report, as if of a pistol, was heard immediately beneath the windows of the Hotel, and was succeeded by a series of fearful screams, and the shoutings of a terrified mob. D—— rushed to a casement, threw it open, and looked out. In the meantime, I stepped to the card-rack, took the letter, put it in my pocket, and replaced it by a facsimile (so far as regards externals) which I had carefully prepared at my lodgings—imitating the D—— cipher very readily by means of a seal formed of bread.

"The disturbance in the street had been occasioned by the frantic behavior of a man with a musket. He had fired it among a crowd of women and children. It proved, however, to have been without ball, and the fellow was suffered to go his way as a lunatic or a drunkard. When he had gone, D—— came from the window, whither I had followed him immediately upon securing the object in view. Soon afterwards I bade him farewell. The pretended lunatic was a man in my own pay."

"But what purpose had you," I asked, "in replacing the letter by a facsimile? Would it not have been better, at the first visit, to have seized it openly and departed?"

"D——," replied Dupin, "is a desperate man, and a man of nerve. His Hotel, too, is not without attendants devoted to his interest. Had I made the wild attempt you suggest, I might never have left the Ministerial presence alive. The good people of Paris might have heard of me no more. But I had an object apart from these considerations. You know my political prepossessions. In this matter I act as a partisan of the lady concerned. For eighteen months the Minister has had her in his power. She has now him in hers—since, being unaware that the letter is not in his possession, he will proceed with his exactions as if it was. Thus will he inevitably commit himself at once to his political destruction. His downfall, too, will not be more precipitate than awkward. It is all very well to talk about the *facilis descensus Averni*;[19] but in all kinds of climbing, as Catalani[20] said of singing, it is far more easy to get up than to come down. In the present instance I have no sympathy—at least no pity—for him who descends. He is that *monstrum horrendum*,[21] an unprincipled man of genius. I confess, however, that I should like very well to know the precise character of his thoughts, when, being defied by her whom the Prefect terms 'a certain personage,' he is reduced to opening the letter which I left for him in the card-rack."

"How? Did you put anything particular in it?"

"Why—it did not seem altogether right to leave the interior blank—that would have been insulting. D——, at Vienna once, did me an evil turn, which I told him, quite good-humoredly, that I should remember. So, as I knew he would feel some curiosity in regard to the identity of the person who had outwitted him, I thought it a pity not to give him a clew. He is well acquainted with my MS., and I just copied into the middle of the blank sheet the word:—

'——Un dessein si funeste,
S'il n'est digne d'Atrée, est digne de Thyeste.[22]

They are to be found in Crébillon's[23] *Atrée*."

1845

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[19] Easy is the descent into Avernus (the lower regions). Vergil, *Æneid*, vi. 126.

[20] Angelica Catalani, a celebrated Italian singer of Poe's time.

[21] dreadful monster. *Æneid*, iii. 658.

[22] "So baleful a design, if not worthy of Atreus, is worthy of Thyestes." These two brothers, according to legend, were both guilty of great crimes.

[23] A French tragic poet of the eighteenth century.

THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO

(ROME)

The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could; but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. *At length* I would be avenged; this was a point definitively settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good-will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point—this Fortunato—although in other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso[1] spirit. For the most part their enthusiasm is adopted to suit the time and opportunity—to practice imposture upon the British and Austrian millionaires. In painting and gemmary, Fortunato, like his countrymen, was a quack—but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially: I was skilful in the Italian vintages myself, and bought largely whenever I could.

It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking much. The man wore motley. He had on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap and bells. I was so pleased to see him that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.

I said to him, "My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking today! But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts."

"How?" said he. "Amontillado? A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival!"

"I have my doubts," I replied; "and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price without consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain."

"Amontillado!"

"I have my doubts."

"Amontillado!"

"And I must satisfy them."

"Amontillado!"

"As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchesi. If any one has a critical turn, it is he. He will tell me—"

"Luchesi cannot tell Amontillado from Sherry."

"And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own."

"Come, let us go."

"Whither?"

"To your vaults."

"My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good-nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchesi—"

"I have no engagement;—come."

"My friend, no. It is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are incrusted with niter."

"Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have been imposed upon. And as for Luchesi, he cannot distinguish Sherry from Amontillado."

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself of my arm. Putting on a mask of black silk, and drawing a roquelaire[2] closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.[3]

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honor of the time. I had told them that I should not return until the morning, and had given them explicit orders not to stir from the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaus, and giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe," said he.

"It is farther on," said I; "but observe the white web-work which gleams from these cavern walls."

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[1] Skilled in critical taste, as for works of art.

[2] short cloak

[3] Literally, palace; residence of a person of wealth.

He turned towards me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of intoxication.

"Niter?" he asked at length.

"Niter," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said, at last.

"Come," I said, with decision, "we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchesi—"

"Enough," he said; "the cough is a mere nothing; it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough."

"True—true," I replied; "and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily—but you should use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damps."

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mold.

"Drink," I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.

"I drink," he said, "to the buried that repose around us."

"And I to your long life."

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

"These vaults," he said, "are extensive."

"The Montresors," I replied, "were a great and numerous family."

"I forget your arms."

"A huge human foot d'or, in a field azure;[4] the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs are embedded in the heel."

"And the motto?"

"*Nemo me impune lacessit.*"[5]

"Good!" he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had passed through walls of piled bones, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into the inmost recesses of the catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

"The niter!" I said; "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough—"

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a flagon of De Grâve. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upwards with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement—a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said, "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said.

"It is this," I answered, producing a trowel from beneath the folds of my roquelaire.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak, and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and, descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaus rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet, in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting

[4] Golden foot in a blue field.
[5] No one challenges me in safety.

his dull torch, endeavored to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchesi—"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key, I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the niter. Indeed it is *very* damp. Once more let me *implore* you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was *not* the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labors and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeaus over the mason work, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated—I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall. I replied to the yells of him who clamored. I reëchoed—I aided—I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamorer grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth, and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Fortunato. The voice said—

"Ha! ha! ha!—he! he! he!—a very good joke indeed—an excellent jest. We will have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo—he! he! he!—over our wine—he! he! he!"

"The Amontillado!" I said.

"He! he! he!—he! he! he!—yes, the Amontillado. But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo,—the Lady Fortunato and the rest? Let us be gone."

"Yes," I said, "let us be gone."

"For the love of God, Montresor!"

"Yes," I said, "for the love of God!"

But to these words I hearkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud—

"Fortunato!"

No answer. I called again—

"Fortunato!"

No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining aperture and let it fall within. There came forth in return only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick—on account of the dampness of the catacombs. I hastened to make an end of my labor. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I reërected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. *In pace requiescat.*[6]

1846

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[6] May he rest in peace.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

Born at Salem, 1804, died at Plymouth, New Hampshire, 1864. He was of an old New England family which for some generations had been in obscurity. He graduated in 1825 with Longfellow from Bowdoin College, one year later than his friend Franklin Pierce. In 1828 appeared his first work of fiction, *Fanshawe*. For several years he was engaged in writing short stories. From 1839 to 1841 he was weigher at the Salem custom house; the following year he spent at Brook Farm, a community of idealists, and in 1842 he married. From 1853 to 1857 he was consul at Liverpool. His home was at various places in Massachusetts, notably at Concord. His principal works are *Twice-Told Tales*, 1837, 1842; *Mosses from an Old Manse*, 1846; *The Scarlet Letter*, 1850; *The House of the Seven Gables*, 1851; *The Blithedale Romance*, 1852; *The Marble Faun*, 1860.

From TWICE-TOLD TALES

DR. HEIDEGGER'S EXPERIMENT

That very singular man, old Dr. Heidegger, once invited four venerable friends to meet him in his study. There were three white-bearded gentlemen, Mr. Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, and Mr. Gascoigne, and a withered gentlewoman, whose name was the Widow Wycherly. They were all melancholy old creatures, who had been unfortunate in life, and whose greatest misfortune it was that they were not long ago in their graves. Mr. Medbourne, in the vigor of his age, had been a prosperous merchant, but had lost his all by a frantic speculation, and was now little better than a mendicant. Colonel Killigrew had wasted his best years, and his health and substance, in the pursuit of sinful pleasures which had given birth to a brood of pains, such as the gout, and divers other torments of soul and body. Mr. Gascoigne was a ruined politician, a man of evil fame, or at least had been so, till time had buried him from the knowledge of the present generation, and made him obscure instead of infamous. As for the Widow Wycherly, tradition tells us that she was a great beauty in her day; but, for a long while past, she had lived in deep seclusion, on account of certain scandalous stories which had prejudiced the gentry of the town against her. It is a circumstance worth mentioning, that each of these three old gentlemen, Mr. Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, and Mr. Gascoigne, were early lovers of the Widow Wycherly, and had once been on the point of cutting each other's throats for her sake. And, before proceeding farther, I will merely hint that Dr. Heidegger and all his four guests were sometimes thought to be a little beside themselves; as is not unfrequently the case with old people, when worried either by present troubles or woful recollections.

"My dear old friends," said Dr. Heidegger, motioning them to be seated, "I am desirous of your assistance in one of those little experiments with which I amuse myself here in my study."

If all stories were true, Dr. Heidegger's study must have been a very curious place. It was a dim, old-fashioned chamber, festooned with cobwebs, and besprinkled with antique dust. Around the walls stood several oaken bookcases, the lower shelves of which were filled with rows of gigantic folios and black-letter quartos, and the upper with little parchment-covered duodecimos. Over the central bookcase was a bronze bust of Hippocrates,[1] with which, according to some authorities, Dr. Heidegger was accustomed to hold consultations in all difficult cases of his practice. In the obscurest corner of the room stood a tall and narrow oaken closet, with its door ajar, within which doubtfully appeared a skeleton. Between two of the bookcases hung a looking-glass, presenting its high and dusty plate within a tarnished gilt frame. Among many wonderful stories related of this mirror, it was fabled that the spirits of all the doctor's deceased patients dwelt within its verge, and would stare him in the face whenever he looked thitherward. The opposite side of the chamber was ornamented with the full-length portrait of a young lady, arrayed in the faded magnificence of silk, satin, and brocade, and with a visage as faded as her dress. Above half a century ago, Dr. Heidegger had been on the point of marriage with this young lady; but, being affected with some slight disorder, she had swallowed one of her lover's prescriptions, and died on the bridal evening. The greatest curiosity of the study remains to be mentioned; it was a ponderous folio volume, bound in black leather, with massive silver clasps. There were no letters on the back, and nobody could tell the title of the book. But it was well known to be a book of magic; and once, when a chambermaid had lifted it, merely to brush away the dust, the skeleton had rattled in its closet, the picture of the young lady had stepped one foot upon the floor, and several ghastly faces had peeped forth from the mirror; while the brazen head of Hippocrates frowned, and said,—"Forbear."

Such was Dr. Heidegger's study. On the

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[1] A Greek physician, 460-377 B. C., called the Father of Medicine.

summer afternoon of our tale, a small round table, as black as ebony, stood in the center of the room, sustaining a cut-glass vase of beautiful form and elaborate workmanship. The sunshine came through the window, between the heavy festoons of two faded damask curtains, and fell directly across this vase; so that a mild splendor was reflected from it on the ashen visages of the five old people who sat around. Four champagne glasses were also on the table.

"My dear old friends," repeated Dr. Heidegger, "may I reckon on your aid in performing an exceedingly curious experiment?"

Now Dr. Heidegger was a very strange old gentleman, whose eccentricity had become the nucleus for a thousand fantastic stories. Some of these fables, to my shame be it spoken, might possibly be traced back to mine own veracious self; and if any passages of the present tale should startle the reader's faith, I must be content to bear the stigma of a fiction-monger.

When the doctor's four guests heard him talk of his proposed experiment, they anticipated nothing more wonderful than the murder of a mouse in an air-pump, or the examination of a cobweb by the microscope, or some similar nonsense, with which he was constantly in the habit of pestering his intimates. But without waiting for a reply, Dr. Heidegger hobbled across the chamber, and returned with the same ponderous folio, bound in black leather, which common report affirmed to be a book of magic. Undoing the silver clasps, he opened the volume, and took from among its black-letter pages a rose, or what was once a rose, though now the green leaves and crimson petals had assumed one brownish hue, and the ancient flower seemed ready to crumble to dust in the doctor's hands.

"This rose," said Dr. Heidegger, with a sigh, "this same withered and crumbling flower, blossomed five-and-fifty years ago. It was given me by Sylvia Ward, whose portrait hangs yonder; and I meant to wear it in my bosom at our wedding. Five-and-fifty years it has been treasured between the leaves of this old volume. Now, would you deem it possible that this rose of half a century could ever bloom again?"

"Nonsense!" said the Widow Wycherly, with a peevish toss of her head. "You might as well ask whether an old woman's wrinkled face could ever bloom again."

"See!" answered Dr. Heidegger.

He uncovered the vase, and threw the faded rose into the water which it contained. At first, it lay lightly on the surface of the fluid, appearing to imbibe none of its moisture. Soon, however, a singular change began to be visible. The crushed and dried petals stirred, and assumed a deepening tinge of crimson, as if the flower were reviving from a deathlike slumber; the slender stalk and twigs of foliage became green; and there was the rose of half a century, looking as fresh as when Sylvia Ward had first given it to her lover. It was scarcely full blown; for some of its delicate red leaves curled modestly around its moist bosom, within which two or three dewdrops were sparkling.

"That is certainly a very pretty deception," said the doctor's friends; carelessly, however, for they had witnessed greater miracles at a conjurer's show; "pray how was it effected?"

"Did you never hear of the 'Fountain of Youth?'" asked Dr. Heidegger, "which Ponce De Leon,[2] the Spanish adventurer, went in search of two or three centuries ago?"

"But did Ponce De Leon ever find it?" said the Widow Wycherly.

"No," answered Dr. Heidegger, "for he never sought it in the right place. The famous Fountain of Youth, if I am rightly informed, is situated in the southern part of the Floridian peninsula, not far from Lake Macaco. Its source is overshadowed by several gigantic magnolias, which, though numberless centuries old, have been kept as fresh as violets by the virtues of this wonderful water. An acquaintance of mine, knowing my curiosity in such matters, has sent me what you see in the vase."

"Ahem!" said Colonel Killigrew, who believed not a word of the doctor's story; "and what may be the effect of this fluid on the human frame?"

"You shall judge for yourself, my dear Colonel," replied Dr. Heidegger; "and all of you, my respected friends, are welcome to so much of this admirable fluid as may restore to you the bloom of youth. For my own part, having had much trouble in growing old, I am in no hurry to grow young again. With your permission, therefore, I will merely watch the progress of the experiment."

While he spoke, Dr. Heidegger had been filling the four champagne glasses with the water of the Fountain of Youth. It was apparently impregnated with an effervescent gas, for little bubbles were continually ascending from the depths of the glasses, and bursting in silvery spray at the surface. As the liquor diffused a pleasant perfume, the old people doubted not that it possessed cordial and comfortable properties; and, though utter skeptics as to its rejuvenescent power, they were inclined to swallow it at once. But Dr. Heidegger besought them to stay a moment.

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[2] The Spanish explorer who discovered Florida, March 27, 1513, while in search of the island wherein was the fountain of youth.

"Before you drink, my respectable old friends," said he, "it would be well that, with the experience of a lifetime to direct you, you should draw up a few general rules for your guidance, in passing a second time through the perils of youth. Think what a sin and a shame it would be, if with your peculiar advantages, you should not become patterns of virtue and wisdom to all the young people of the age!"

The doctor's four venerable friends made him no answer, except by a feeble and tremulous laugh; so very ridiculous was the idea, that, knowing how closely repentance treads behind the steps of error, they should ever go astray again.

"Drink, then," said the doctor, bowing: "I rejoice that I have so well selected the subjects of my experiment."

With palsied hands, they raised the glasses to their lips. The liquor, if it really possessed such virtues as Dr. Heidegger imputed to it, could not have been bestowed on four human beings who needed it more wofully. They looked as if they had never known what youth or pleasure was, but had been the offspring of Nature's dotage, and always the gray, decrepit, sapless, miserable creatures, who now sat stooping round the doctor's table, without life enough in their souls or bodies to be animated even by the prospect of growing young again. They drank off the water, and replaced their glasses on the table.

Assuredly there was an almost immediate improvement in the aspect of the party, not unlike what might have been produced by a glass of generous wine, together with a sudden glow of cheerful sunshine brightening over all their visages at once. There was a healthful suffusion on their cheeks, instead of the ashen hue that had made them look so corpse-like. They gazed at one another, and fancied that some magic power had really begun to smooth away the deep and sad inscriptions which Father Time had been so long engraving on their brows. The Widow Wycherly adjusted her cap, for she felt almost like a woman again.

"Give us more of this wondrous water!" cried they, eagerly. "We are younger—but we are still too old! Quick—give us more!"

"Patience, patience!" quoth Dr. Heidegger, who sat watching the experiment with philosophic coolness. "You have been a long time growing old. Surely, you might be content to grow young in half an hour! But the water is at your service."

Again he filled their glasses with the liquor of youth, enough of which still remained in the vase to turn half the old people in the city to the age of their own grandchildren. While the bubbles were yet sparkling on the brim, the doctor's four guests snatched their glasses from the table, and swallowed the contents at a single gulp. Was it delusion? Even while the draught was passing down their throats, it seemed to have wrought a change on their whole systems. Their eyes grew clear and bright; a dark shade deepened among their silvery locks, they sat around the table, three gentlemen of middle age, and a woman hardly beyond her buxom prime.

"My dear widow, you are charming!" cried Colonel Killigrew, whose eyes had been fixed upon her face, while the shadows of age were flitting from it like darkness from the crimson daybreak.

The fair widow knew, of old, that Colonel Killigrew's compliments were not always measured by sober truth; so she started up and ran to the mirror, still dreading that the ugly visage of an old woman would meet her gaze. Meanwhile, the three gentlemen behaved in such a manner as proved that the water of the Fountain of Youth possessed some intoxicating qualities; unless, indeed, their exhilaration of spirits were merely a lightsome dizziness caused by the sudden removal of the weight of years. Mr. Gascoigne's mind seemed to run on political topics, but whether relating to the past, present, or future, could not easily be determined, since the same ideas and phrases have been in vogue these fifty years. Now he rattled forth full-throated sentences about patriotism, national glory, and the people's right; now he muttered some perilous stuff or other, in a sly and doubtful whisper, so cautiously that even his own conscience could scarcely catch the secret; and now again he spoke in measured accents, and a deeply deferential tone, as if a royal ear were listening to his well-turned periods. Colonel Killigrew all this time had been trolling forth a jolly bottle-song, and ringing his glass in symphony with the chorus, while his eyes wandered towards the buxom figure of the Widow Wycherly. On the other side of the table, Mr. Medbourne was involved in a calculation of dollars and cents, with which was strangely intermingled a project for supplying the East Indies with ice, by harnessing a team of whales to the polar icebergs.

As for the Widow Wycherly, she stood before the mirror curtsying and simpering to her own image, and greeting it as the friend whom she loved better than all the world beside. She thrust her face close to the glass, to see whether some long-remembered wrinkle or crow's-foot had indeed vanished. She examined whether the snow had so entirely melted from her hair, that the venerable cap could be safely thrown aside. At last, turning briskly away, she came with a sort of dancing step to the table.

"My dear old doctor," cried she, "pray favor me with another glass!"

"Certainly, my dear madam, certainly!" replied the complaisant doctor; "see! I have already filled the glasses."

There, in fact, stood the four glasses, brimful of this wonderful water, the delicate spray of which, as it effervesced from the surface, resembled the tremulous glitter of diamonds. It was now so nearly sunset that the chamber had grown duskier than ever; but a mild and moonlike splendor gleamed from within the vase, and rested alike on the four guests, and on the doctor's venerable figure. He sat in a high-backed, elaborately carved, oaken arm-chair, with a gray dignity of aspect that might have well befitted that very Father Time whose power had never been disputed save by this fortunate company. Even while quaffing the third draught of the Fountain of Youth, they were almost awed by the expression of his mysterious visage.

But, the next moment, the exhilarating gush of young life shot through their veins. They were now in the happy prime of youth. Age, with its miserable train of cares, and sorrows, and diseases, was remembered only as the trouble of a dream from which they had joyously awoke. The fresh gloss of the soul, so early lost, and without which the world's successive scenes had been but a gallery of faded pictures, again threw its enchantment over all their prospects. They felt like new-created beings in a new-created universe.

"We are young! We are young!" they cried exultingly.

Youth, like the extremity of age, had effaced the strongly-marked characteristics of middle life, and mutually assimilated them all. They were a group of merry youngsters, almost maddened with the exuberant frolicsomeness of their years. The most singular effect of their gayety was an impulse to mock the infirmity and decrepitude of which they had so lately been the victims. They laughed loudly at their old-fashioned attire, the wide-skirted coats and flapped waistcoats of the young men, and the ancient cap and gown of the blooming girl. One limped across the floor like a gouty grandfather; one set a pair of spectacles astride of his nose, and pretended to pore over the black-letter pages of the book of magic; a third seated himself in an arm-chair, and strove to imitate the venerable dignity of Dr. Heidegger. Then all shouted mirthfully, and leaped about the room. The Widow Wycherly—if so fresh a damsel could be called a widow—tripped up to the doctor's chair, with a mischievous merriment in her rosy face.

"Doctor, you dear old soul," cried she, "get up and dance with me!" And then the four young people laughed louder than ever, to think what a queer figure the poor old doctor would cut.

"Pray excuse me," answered the doctor quietly. "I am old and rheumatic, and my dancing days were over long ago. But either of these gay young gentlemen will be glad of so pretty a partner."

"Dance with me, Clara!" cried Colonel Killigrew.

"No, no, I will be her partner!" shouted Mr. Gascoigne.

"She promised me her hand, fifty years ago!" exclaimed Mr. Medbourne.

They all gathered round her. One caught both her hands in his passionate grasp—another threw his arm about her waist—the third buried his hand among the glossy curls that clustered beneath the widow's cap. Blushing, panting, struggling, chiding, laughing, her warm breath fanning each of their faces by turns, she strove to disengage herself, yet still remained in their triple embrace. Never was there a livelier picture of youthful rivalship, with bewitching beauty for the prize. Yet, by a strange deception, owing to the duskiness of the chamber, and the antique dresses which they still wore, the tall mirror is said to have reflected the figures of the three old, gray, withered grandsires, ridiculously contending for the skinny ugliness of a shriveled grandam.

But they were young: their burning passions proved them so. Inflamed to madness by the coquetry of the girl-widow, who neither granted nor quite withheld her favors, the three rivals began to interchange threatening glances. Still keeping hold of the fair prize, they grappled fiercely at one another's throats. As they struggled to and fro, the table was overturned, and the vase dashed into a thousand fragments. The precious Water of Youth flowed in a bright stream across the floor, moistening the wings of a butterfly, which, grown old in the decline of summer, had alighted there to die. The insect fluttered lightly through the chamber, and settled on the snowy head of Dr. Heidegger.

"Come, come, gentlemen!—come, Madame Wycherly," exclaimed the doctor, "I really must protest against this riot."

They stood still, and shivered; for it seemed as if gray Time were calling them back from their sunny youth, far down into the chill and darksome vale of years. They looked at old Dr. Heidegger, who sat in his carved arm-chair, holding the rose of half a century, which he had rescued from among the fragments of the shattered vase. At the motion of his hand, the four rioters resumed their seats; the more readily, because their violent exertions had wearied them, youthful though they were.

"My poor Sylvia's rose!" ejaculated Dr. Heidegger, holding it in the light of the sunset clouds; "it appears to be fading again."

And so it was. Even while the party were looking at it, the flower continued to shrivel up, till it became as dry and fragile as when the doctor had first thrown it into the vase. He shook off the few drops of moisture which clung to its petals.

"I love it as well thus as in its dewy freshness," observed he, pressing the withered rose to his withered lips. While he spoke, the butterfly fluttered down from the doctor's snowy head, and fell upon the floor.

His guests shivered again. A strange chilliness, whether of the body or spirit they could not tell, was creeping gradually over them all. They gazed at one another, and fancied that each fleeting moment snatched away a charm, and left a deepening furrow where none had been before. Was it an illusion? Had the changes of a lifetime been crowded into so brief a space, and were they now four aged people, sitting with their old friend, Dr. Heidegger?

"Are we grown old again, so soon?" cried they, dolefully.

In truth they had. The Water of Youth possessed merely a virtue more transient than that of wine. The delirium which it created had effervesced away. Yes! they were old again. With a shuddering impulse, that showed her a woman still, the widow clasped her skinny hands before her face, and wished that the coffin lid were over it, since it could be no longer beautiful.

"Yes, friends, ye are old again," said Dr. Heidegger, "and lo! the Water of Youth is all lavished on the ground. Well—I bemoan it not; for if the fountain gushed at my very doorstep, I would not stoop to bathe my lips in it—no, though its delirium were for years instead of moments. Such is the lesson ye have taught me!"

But the doctor's four friends had taught no such lesson to themselves. They resolved forthwith to make a pilgrimage to Florida, and quaff at morning, noon, and night, from the Fountain of Youth.

1837

NOTE.—In an English review, not long since, I have been accused of plagiarizing the idea of this story from a chapter in one of the novels of Alexandre Dumas. There has undoubtedly been a plagiarism on one side or the other; but as my story was written a good deal more than twenty years ago, and as the novel is of considerably more recent date, I take pleasure in thinking that M. Dumas has done me the honor to appropriate one of the fanciful conceptions of my earlier days. He is heartily welcome to it; nor is it the only instance, by many, in which the great French romancer has exercised the privilege of commanding genius by confiscating the intellectual property of less famous people to his own use and behoof.

September. 1860.

A RILL FROM THE TOWN PUMP

(SCENE—*the corner of two principal streets.*[1] *The* TOWN PUMP *talking through its nose.*)

Noon, by the North clock! Noon, by the east! High noon, too, by these hot sunbeams, which fall, scarcely aslope, upon my head, and almost make the water bubble and smoke, in the trough under my nose. Truly, we public characters have a tough time of it! And, among all the town officers, chosen at March meeting, where is he that sustains, for a single year, the burden of such manifold duties as are imposed, in perpetuity, upon the Town Pump? The title of "town treasurer" is rightfully mine, as guardian of the best treasure that the town has. The overseers of the poor ought to make me their chairman, since I provide bountifully for the pauper, without expense to him that pays taxes. I am at the head of the fire department, and one of the physicians to the board of health. As a keeper of the peace, all water drinkers will confess me equal to the constable. I perform some of the duties of the town clerk, by promulgating public notices, when they are posted on my front. To speak within bounds, I am the chief person of the municipality, and exhibit, moreover, an admirable pattern to my brother officers, by the cool, steady, upright, downright, and impartial discharge of my business, and the constancy with which I stand to my post. Summer or winter, nobody seeks me in vain; for, all day long, I am seen at the busiest corner, just above the market, stretching out my arms, to rich and poor alike; and at night, I hold a lantern over my head, both to show where I am, and keep people out of the gutters.

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[1] Essex and Washington streets, Salem. (Hawthorne's note.)

At this sultry noontide, I am cupbearer to the parched populace, for whose benefit an iron goblet is chained to my waist. Like a dram seller on the mall,[2] at muster day, I cry aloud to all and sundry, in my plainest accents, and at the very tiptop of my voice. Here it is, gentlemen! Here is the good liquor! Walk up, walk up, gentlemen! walk up, walk up! Here is the superior stuff! Here is the unadulterated ale of father Adam—better than Cognac, Hollands, Jamaica, strong beer, or wine of any price; here it is, by the hogshead or the single glass, and not a cent to pay! Walk up, gentlemen, walk up, and help yourselves!

It were a pity, if all this outcry should draw no customers. Here they come. A hot day, gentlemen! Quaff, and away again, so as to keep yourselves in a nice cool sweat. You, my friend, will need another cupful, to wash the dust out of your throat, if it be as thick there as it is on your cowhide shoes. I see that you have trudged half a score of miles today, and, like a wise man, have passed by the taverns, and stopped at the running brooks and well-curbs. Otherwise, betwixt heat without and fire within, you would have been burned to a cinder, or melted down to nothing at all, in the fashion of a jelly-fish. Drink, and make room for that other fellow, who seeks my aid to quench the fiery fever of last night's potations, which he drained from no cup of mine. Welcome, most rubicund sir! You and I have been great strangers, hitherto; nor, to confess the truth, will my nose be anxious for a closer intimacy, till the fumes of your breath be a little less potent. Mercy on you, man! the water absolutely hisses down your red-hot gullet, and is converted quite to steam, in the miniature Tophet, which you mistake for a stomach. Fill again, and tell me, on the word of an honest toper, did you ever, in cellar, tavern, or any kind of a dram shop, spend the price of your children's food for a swig half so delicious? Now, for the first time these ten years, you know the flavor of cold water. Good-by; and, whenever you are thirsty, remember that I keep a constant supply, at the old stand. Who next? Oh, my little friend, you are let loose from school, and come hither to scrub your blooming face, and drown the memory of certain taps of the ferrule, and other schoolboy troubles, in a draught from the Town Pump. Take it, pure as the current of your young life. Take it, and may your heart and tongue never be scorched with a fiercer thirst than now! There, my dear child, put down the cup, and yield your place to this elderly gentleman, who treads so tenderly over the paving stones, that I suspect he is afraid of breaking them. What! he limps by, without so much as thanking me, as if my hospitable offers were meant only for people who have no wine cellars. Well, well, sir—no harm done, I hope! Go draw the cork, tip the decanter; but, when your great toe shall set you a-roaring, it will be no affair of mine. If gentlemen love the pleasant titillation of the gout, it is all one to the Town Pump. This thirsty dog, with his red tongue lolling out, does not scorn my hospitality, but stands on his hind legs, and laps eagerly out of the trough. See how lightly he capers away again! Jowler, did your worship ever have the gout?

Are you all satisfied? Then wipe your mouths, my good friends; and, while my spout has a moment's leisure, I will delight the town with a few historical reminiscences. In far antiquity, beneath a darksome shadow of venerable boughs, a spring bubbled out of the leaf-strewn earth, in the very spot where you now behold me, on the sunny pavement. The water was as bright and clear, and deemed as precious, as liquid diamonds. The Indian sagamores drank of it, from time immemorial, till the fatal deluge of the fire water burst upon the red men, and swept their whole race away from the cold fountains. Endicott,[3] and his followers, came next, and often knelt down to drink, dipping their long beards in the spring. The richest goblet, then, was of birch bark. Governor Winthrop, after a journey afoot from Boston,[4] drank here, out of the hollow of his hand. The elder Higginson[5] here wet his palm, and laid it on the brow of the first town-born child. For many years it was the watering-place, and, as it were, the wash bowl of the vicinity—whither all decent folks resorted to purify their visages, and gaze at them afterwards—at least, the pretty maidens did—in the mirror which it made. On Sabbath days, whenever a babe was to be baptized, the sexton filled his basin here, and placed it on the communion table of the humble meeting-house, which partly covered the site of yonder stately brick one. Thus, one generation after another was consecrated to Heaven by its waters, and cast their waxing and waning shadows into its glassy bosom, and vanished from the earth, as if mortal life were but a flitting image in a fountain. Finally, the fountain vanished also. Cellars were dug on all sides, and cartloads of gravel flung upon its source, whence oozed a turbid stream, forming a mud puddle, at the corner of two streets. In the hot months, when its refreshment was most needed, the dust flew in clouds over the forgotten birthplace of the waters, now their grave. But, in the course of time, a Town Pump was sunk into the source of the ancient spring; and when the first decayed, another took its place—and then another, and still another—till here stand I, gentlemen and ladies, to serve you with my iron goblet. Drink, and be refreshed! The water is as pure and cold as that which slaked the thirst of the red sagamore, beneath the aged boughs, though now the gem of the wilderness is treasured under these hot stones, where no shadow falls but from the brick buildings. And be it the moral of my story, that, as this wasted and long-lost fountain is now known and prized again, so shall the virtues of cold water, too little valued since your fathers' days, be recognized by all.

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[2] promenade

[3] See note 36, p. 37.

Your pardon good people! I must interrupt my stream of eloquence, and spout forth a stream of water, to replenish the trough for this teamster and his two yoke of oxen, who have come from Topsfield, or somewhere along that way. No part of my business is pleasanter than the watering of cattle. Look! how rapidly they lower the watermark on the sides of the trough, till their capacious stomachs are moistened with a gallon or two apiece, and they can afford time to breathe it in, with sighs of calm enjoyment. Now they roll their quiet eyes around the brim of their monstrous drinking vessel. An ox is your true toper.

But I perceive, my dear auditors, that you are impatient for the remainder of my discourse. Impute it, I beseech you, to no defect of modesty, if I insist a little longer on so fruitful a topic as my own multifarious merits. It is altogether for your good. The better you think of me, the better men and women will you find yourselves. I shall say nothing of my all-important aid on washing days; though, on that account alone, I might call myself the household god of a hundred families. Far be it from me also to hint, my respectable friends, at the show of dirty faces, which you would present, without my pains to keep you clean. Nor will I remind you how often when the midnight bells make you tremble for your combustible town, you have fled to the Town Pump, and found me always at my post, firm amid the confusion, and ready to drain my vital current in your behalf. Neither is it worth while to lay much stress on my claims to a medical diploma, as the physician, whose simple rule of practice is preferable to all the nauseous lore which has found men sick or left them so since the days of Hippocrates.[6] Let us take a broader view of my beneficial influence on mankind.

No; these are trifles, compared with the merits which wise men concede to me—if not in my single self, yet as the representative of a class—of being the grand reformer of the age. From my spout and such spouts as mine, must flow the stream that shall cleanse our earth of the vast portion of its crime and anguish which has gushed from the fiery fountains of the still. In this mighty enterprise, the cow shall be my great confederate. Milk and water! The TOWN PUMP and the Cow! Such is the glorious copartnership that shall tear down the distilleries and brewhouses, uproot the vineyards, shatter the cider presses, ruin the tea and coffee trade, and finally monopolize the whole business of quenching thirst. Blessed consummation! Then Poverty shall pass away from the land, finding no hovel so wretched where her squalid form may shelter itself. Then Disease, for lack of other victims, shall gnaw its own heart, and die. Then Sin, if she do not die, shall lose half her strength. Until now, the frenzy of hereditary fever has raged in the human blood transmitted from sire to son, and rekindled, in every generation, by fresh draughts of liquid flame. When that inward fire shall be extinguished, the heat of passion cannot but grow cool, and war—the drunkenness of nations—perhaps will cease. At least, there will be no war of households. The husband and wife, drinking deep of peaceful joy,—a calm bliss of temperate affections,—shall pass hand in hand through life, and lie down, not reluctantly, at its protracted close. To them, the past will be no turmoil of mad dreams, nor the future an eternity of such moments as follow the delirium of the drunkard. Their dead faces shall express what their spirits were, and are to be, by a lingering smile of memory and hope.

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[4] Winthrop in his *Journal* tells of walking from Boston to Salem in 1631.

[5] The Reverend Francis Higginson, who came to Salem in June, 1629.

[6] See note 1, p. 357.

Ahem! Dry work, this speechifying; especially to an unpracticed orator. I never conceived, till now, what toil the temperance lecturers undergo for my sake. Hereafter, they shall have the business to themselves. Do, some kind Christian, pump a stroke or two, just to wet my whistle. Thank you, sir! My dear hearers, when the world shall have been regenerated by my instrumentality, you will collect your useless vats and liquor casks into one great pile, and make a bonfire in honor of the Town Pump. And, when I shall have decayed like my predecessors then, if you revere my memory, let a marble fountain, richly sculptured, take my place upon this spot. Such monuments should be erected everywhere, and inscribed with the names of the distinguished champions of my cause. Now listen; for something very important is to come next.

There are two or three honest friends of mine—and true friends, I know, they are—who, nevertheless, by their fiery pugnacity in my behalf, do put me in fearful hazard of a broken nose or even a total overthrow upon the pavement, and the loss of the treasure which I guard. I pray you, gentlemen, let this fault be amended. Is it decent, think you, to get tipsy with zeal for temperance, and take up the honorable cause of the Town Pump in the style of a toper fighting for his brandy bottle? Or, can the excellent qualities of cold water be not otherwise exemplified, than by plunging, slapdash, into hot water, and wofully scalding yourselves and other people? Trust me, they may. In the moral warfare, which you are to wage—and, indeed, in the whole conduct of your lives—you cannot choose a better example than myself, who have never permitted the dust and sultry atmosphere, the turbulence and manifold disquietudes of the world around me, to reach that deep, calm well of purity, which may be called my soul. And whenever I pour out that soul it is to cool earth's fever, or cleanse its stains.

One o'clock! Nay, then, if the dinner bell begins to speak, I may as well hold my peace. Here comes a pretty young girl of my acquaintance, with a large stone pitcher for me to fill. May she draw a husband, while drawing her water, as Rachel did of old.[7] Hold out your vessel, my dear! There it is, full to the brim; so now run home, peeping at your sweet image in the pitcher, as you go; and forget not, in a glass of my own liquor, to drink—"SUCCESS TO THE TOWN PUMP!"

1837

From TWICE-TOLD TALES

LEGENDS OF THE PROVINCE HOUSE[1]

III

LADY ELEANORE'S MANTLE

Mine excellent friend, the landlord of the Province House, was pleased, the other evening, to invite Mr. Tiffany and myself to an oyster supper. This slight mark of respect and gratitude, as he handsomely observed, was far less than the ingenious tale-teller, and I, the humble note-taker of his narratives, had fairly earned, by the public notice which our joint lucubrations[2] had attracted to his establishment. Many a cigar had been smoked within his premises—many a glass of wine, or more potent *aqua vitæ*,[3] had been quaffed—many a dinner had been eaten by curious strangers, who, save for the fortunate conjunction of Mr. Tiffany and me, would never have ventured through that darksome avenue which gives access to the historic precincts of the Province House. In short, if any credit be due to the courteous assurances of Mr. Thomas Waite, we had brought his forgotten mansion almost as effectually into public view as if we had thrown down the vulgar range of shoe shops and dry goods stores which hides its aristocratic front from Washington Street. It may be unadvisable, however, to speak too loudly of the increased custom of the house, lest Mr. Waite should find it difficult to renew the lease on so favorable terms as heretofore.

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[7] *Genesis* xxix. 9, 10.

[1] The first four stories of the second series of the *Twice-Told Tales* have their setting in the old Boston Province House, which still stands fronting on a small court leading off Washington Street opposite the Old South Church. This old three-story brick building built by Peter Sergeant, third husband of Sir W. Phipps's widow, was bought in 1716 to be the home of the royal governors of Massachusetts, but in Hawthorne's time was used as an inn. Mr. Thomas Waite was the landlord and Mr. Bela Tiffany the elderly lodger who told Hawthorne the legends connected with the place.

[2] The *Twice-Told Tales*.

[3] Any kind of distilled spirits.

Being thus welcomed as benefactors, neither Mr. Tiffany nor myself felt any scruple in doing full justice to the good things that were set before us. If the feast were less magnificent than those same paneled walls had witnessed, in a by-gone century,—if mine host presided with somewhat less of state than might have befitted a successor of the royal governors,—if the guests made a less imposing show than the bewigged, and powdered, and embroidered dignitaries, who erst banqueted at the gubernatorial table, and now sleep within their armorial tombs on Copp's Hill,[4] or round King's Chapel[5]—yet never, I may boldly say, did a more comfortable little party assemble in the Province House, from Queen Anne's days to the Revolution. The occasion was rendered more interesting by the presence of a venerable personage, whose own actual reminiscences went back to the epoch of Gage and Howe,[6] and even supplied him with a doubtful anecdote or two of Hutchinson.[7] He was one of that small, and now all but extinguished class, whose attachment to royalty, and to the colonial institutions and customs that were connected with it, had never yielded to the democratic heresies of after times. The young queen of Britain has not a more loyal subject in her realm—perhaps not one who would kneel before her throne with such reverential love — as this old grandsire, whose head has whitened beneath the mild sway of the republic, which still, in his mellower moments, he terms a usurpation. Yet prejudices so obstinate have not made him an ungentle or impracticable companion. If the truth must be told, the life of the aged loyalist has been of such a scrambling and unsettled character,—he has had so little choice of friends, and been so often destitute of any,—that I doubt whether he would refuse a cup of kindness[8] with either Oliver Cromwell or John Hancock;—to say nothing of any democrat now upon the stage. In another paper of this series, I may perhaps give the reader a closer glimpse of his portrait.

Our host, in due season, uncorked a bottle of Madeira, of such exquisite perfume and admirable flavor, that he surely must have discovered it in an ancient bin, down deep beneath the deepest cellar, where some jolly old butler stored away the Governor's choicest wine, and forgot to reveal the secret on his deathbed. Peace to his red-nosed ghost, and a libation to his memory! This precious liquor was imbibed by Mr. Tiffany with peculiar zest; and after sipping the third glass, it was his pleasure to give us one of the oddest legends which he had yet raked from the storehouse where he keeps such matters. With some suitable adornments from my own fancy, it ran pretty much as follows.

Not long after Colonel Shute[9] had assumed the government of Massachusetts Bay, now nearly a hundred and twenty years ago, a young lady of rank and fortune arrived from England, to claim his protection as her guardian. He was her distant relative, but the nearest who had survived the gradual extinction of her family; so that no more eligible shelter could be found for the rich and high-born Lady Eleanore Rochcliffe than within the Province House of a transatlantic colony. The consort of Governor Shute, moreover, had been as a mother to her childhood, and was now anxious to receive her, in the hope that a beautiful young woman would be exposed to infinitely less peril from the primitive society of New England than amid the artifices and corruptions of a court. If either the Governor or his lady had especially consulted their own comfort, they would probably have sought to devolve the responsibility on other hands; since, with some noble and splendid traits of character, Lady Eleanore was remarkable for a harsh, unyielding pride, a haughty consciousness of her hereditary and personal advantages, which made her almost incapable of control. Judging from many traditionary anecdotes, this peculiar temper was hardly less than a monomania; or, if the acts which it inspired were those of a sane person, it seemed due from Providence that pride so sinful should be followed by as severe a retribution. That tinge of the marvelous, which is thrown over so many of these half-forgotten legends, has probably imparted an additional wildness to the strange story of Lady Eleanore Rochcliffe.

The ship in which she came passenger had arrived at Newport, whence Lady Eleanore was conveyed to Boston in the Governor's coach, attended by a small escort of gentlemen on horseback. The ponderous equipage, with its four black horses, attracted much notice as it rumbled through Cornhill,[10] surrounded by the prancing steeds of half a dozen cavaliers, with swords dangling to their stirrups and pistols at their holsters. Through the large glass windows of the coach, as it rolled along, the people could discern the figure of Lady Eleanore, strangely combining an almost queenly stateliness with the grace and beauty of a maiden in her teens. A singular tale had gone abroad among the ladies of the province, that their fair rival was indebted for much of the irresistible charm of her appearance to a certain article of dress—an embroidered mantle—which had been wrought by the most skilful artist in London, and possessed even magical properties of adornment. On the present occasion, however, she owed nothing to the witchery of dress, being clad in a riding habit of velvet, which would have appeared stiff and ungraceful on any other form.

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[4] The Copp's Hill burying ground, at the north end of Boston, dates from 1660.

[5] The first King's Chapel on Tremont Street was built by Andros in 1689; but the present one, on the same site, dates from 1754.

[6] British generals in the Revolutionary War.

[7] Governor of Massachusetts 1771-1774.

[8] Cf. Burns's *Auld Lang Syne*.

[9] Samuel Shute, governor of Massachusetts, 1716-1727.

The coachman reined in his four black steeds, and the whole cavalcade came to a pause in front of the contorted iron balustrade that fenced the Province House from the public street. It was an awkward coincidence that the bell of the Old South[11] was just then tolling for a funeral; so that, instead of a gladsome peal with which it was customary to announce the arrival of distinguished strangers, Lady Eleanore Rochcliffe was ushered by a doleful clang, as if calamity had come embodied in her beautiful person.

"A very great disrespect!" exclaimed Captain Langford, an English officer, who had recently brought despatches to Governor Shute. "The funeral should have been deferred, lest Lady Eleanore's spirits be affected by such a dismal welcome."

"With your pardon, sir," replied Doctor Clarke, a physician, and a famous champion of the popular party, "whatever the heralds may pretend, a dead beggar must have precedence of a living queen. King Death confers high privileges."

These remarks were interchanged while the speakers waited a passage through the crowd, which had gathered on each side of the gateway, leaving an open avenue to the portal of the Province House. A black slave in livery now leaped from behind the coach, and threw open the door; while at the same moment, Governor Shute descended the flight of steps from his mansion, to assist Lady Eleanore in alighting. But the Governor's stately approach was anticipated in a manner that excited general astonishment. A pale young man, with his black hair all in disorder, rushed from the throng, and prostrated himself beside the coach, thus offering his person as a footstool for Lady Eleanore Rochcliffe to tread upon. She held back an instant, yet with an expression as if doubting whether the young man were worthy to bear the weight of her footstep, rather than dissatisfied to receive such awful reverence from a fellow-mortal.

"Up, sir," said the Governor, sternly, at the same time lifting his cane over the intruder. "What means the bedlamite[12] by this freak?"

"Nay," answered Lady Eleanore playfully, but with more scorn than pity in her tone, "Your Excellency shall not strike him. When men seek only to be trampled upon, it were a pity to deny them a favor so easily granted—and so well deserved!"

Then, though as lightly as a sunbeam on a cloud, she placed her foot upon the cowering form, and extended her hand to meet that of the Governor. There was a brief interval, during which Lady Eleanore retained this attitude; and never, surely, was there an apter emblem of aristocracy and hereditary pride, trampling on human sympathies and the kindred of nature, than these two figures presented at that moment. Yet the spectators were so smitten with her beauty, and so essential did pride seem to the existence of such a creature, that they gave a simultaneous exclamation of applause.

"Who is this insolent young fellow?" inquired Captain Langford, who still remained beside Doctor Clarke. "If he be in his senses, his impertinence demands the bastinado. If mad, Lady Eleanore should be secured from further inconvenience by his confinement."

"His name is Jervase Helwyse," answered the doctor, "a youth of no birth or fortune, or other advantages, save the mind and soul that nature gave him; and being secretary to our colonial agent in London, it was his misfortune to meet this Lady Eleanore Rochcliffe. He loved her—and her scorn has driven him mad."

"He was mad so to aspire," observed the English officer.

"It may be so," said Doctor Clarke, frowning as he spoke. "But I tell you, sir, I could well-nigh doubt the justice of the Heaven above us, if no signal humiliation overtake this lady, who now treads so haughtily into yonder mansion. She seeks to place herself above the sympathies of our common nature, which envelops all human souls. See if that nature do not assert its claim over her in some mode that shall bring her level with the lowest!"

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[10] In 1722 the name was given to that part of what is now Washington Street north of the Old South Church. See Bonner's Map of Boston, 1722.

[11] The Old South Church.

[12] Lunatic (originally an inmate of the hospital of St. Mary of Bethlehem in London).

"Never!" cried Captain Langford, indignantly; "neither in life, nor when they lay her with her ancestors."

Not many days afterward the Governor gave a ball in honor of Lady Eleanore Rochcliffe. The principal gentry of the colony received invitations, which were distributed to their residences, far and near, by messengers on horseback, bearing missives sealed with all the formality of official dispatches. In obedience to the summons, there was a general gathering of rank, wealth, and beauty; and the wide door of the Province House had seldom given admittance to more numerous and honorable guests than on the evening of Lady Eleanore's ball. Without much extravagance of eulogy, the spectacle might even be termed splendid; for, according to the fashion of the times, the ladies shone in rich silks and satins, outspread over wide projecting hoops; and the gentlemen glittered in gold embroidery, laid unsparingly upon the purple, or scarlet, or sky-blue velvet, which was the material of their coats and waistcoats. The latter article of dress was of great importance, since it enveloped the wearer's body nearly to the knees, and was perhaps bedizened with the amount of his whole year's income, in golden flowers and foliage. The altered taste of the present day—a taste symbolic of a deep change in the whole system of society—would look upon almost any of those gorgeous figures as ridiculous; although that evening the guests sought their reflections in the pier-glasses, and rejoiced to catch their own glitter amid the glittering crowd. What a pity that one of the stately mirrors has not preserved a picture of the scene, which, by the very traits that were so transitory, might have taught us much that would be worth knowing and remembering!

Would, at least, that either painter or mirror could convey to us some faint idea of a garment, already noticed in this legend,—the Lady Eleanore's embroidered mantle,—which the gossips whispered was invested with magic properties, so as to lend a new and untried grace to her figure each time that she put it on! Idle fancy as it is, this mysterious mantle has thrown an awe around my image of her, partly from its fabled virtues, and partly because it was the handiwork of a dying woman, and, perchance, owed the fantastic grace of its conception to the delirium of approaching death.

After the ceremonial greetings had been paid, Lady Eleanore Rochcliffe stood apart from the mob of guests, insulating herself within a small and distinguished circle, to whom she accorded a more cordial favor than to the general throng. The waxen torches threw their radiance vividly over the scene, bringing out its brilliant points in strong relief; but she gazed carelessly, and with now and then an expression of weariness or scorn, tempered with such feminine grace that her auditors scarcely perceived the moral deformity of which it was the utterance. She beheld the spectacle not with vulgar ridicule, as disdaining to be pleased with the provincial mockery of a court festival, but with the deeper scorn of one whose spirit held itself too high to participate in the enjoyment of other human souls. Whether or no the recollections of those who saw her that evening were influenced by the strange events with which she was subsequently connected, so it was that her figure ever after recurred to them as marked by something wild and unnatural, although at the time the general whisper was of her exceeding beauty, and of the indescribable charm which her mantle threw around her. Some close observers, indeed, detected a feverish flush and alternate paleness of countenance, with a corresponding flow and revulsion of spirits, and once or twice, a painful and helpless betrayal of lassitude, as if she were on the point of sinking to the ground. Then, with a nervous shudder, she seemed to arouse her energies, and threw some bright and playful, yet half-wicked sarcasm, into the conversation. There was so strange a characteristic in her manners and sentiments, that it astonished every right-minded listener; till looking in her face, a lurking and incomprehensible glance and smile perplexed them with doubts both as to her seriousness and sanity. Gradually, Lady Eleanore Rochcliffe's circle grew smaller, till only four gentlemen remained in it. These were Captain Langford, the English officer before mentioned; a Virginian planter, who had come to Massachusetts on some political errand; a young Episcopal clergyman, the grandson of a British earl; and, lastly, the private secretary of Governor Shute, whose obsequiousness had won a sort of tolerance from Lady Eleanore.

At different periods of the evening the liveried servants of the Province House passed among the guests, bearing huge trays of refreshments, and French and Spanish wines. Lady Eleanore Rochcliffe, who refused to wet her beautiful lips even with a bubble of champagne, had sunk back into a large damask chair, apparently overwearied either with the excitement of the scene or its tedium; and while, for an instant, she was unconscious of voices, laughter, and music, a young man stole forward, and knelt down at her feet. He bore a salver in his hand, on which was a chased silver goblet, filled to the brim with wine, which he offered as reverentially as to a crowned queen, or rather with the awful devotion of a priest doing sacrifice to his idol. Conscious that some one touched her robe, Lady Eleanore started, and unclosed her eyes upon the pale, wild features and disheveled hair of Jervase Helwyse.

"Why do you haunt me thus?" said she, in a languid tone, but with a kindlier feeling than she ordinarily permitted herself to express. "They tell me that I have done you harm."

"Heaven knows if that be so," replied the young man, solemnly. "But, Lady Eleanore, in requital of that harm, if such there be, and for your own earthly and heavenly welfare, I pray you to take one sip of this holy wine, and then to pass the goblet round among the guests. And this shall be a symbol that you have not sought to withdraw yourself from the chain of human sympathies—which whoso would shake off must keep company with fallen angels."

"Where has this mad fellow stolen that sacramental vessel?" exclaimed the Episcopal clergyman.

This question drew the notice of the guests to the silver cup, which was recognized as appertaining to the communion plate of the Old South Church; and, for aught that could be known, it was brimming over with the consecrated wine.

"Perhaps it is poisoned," half whispered the Governor's secretary.

"Pour it down the villain's throat!" cried the Virginian, fiercely.

"Turn him out of the house!" cried Captain Langford, seizing Jervase Helwyse so roughly by the shoulder that the sacramental cup was overturned, and its contents sprinkled upon Lady Eleanore's mantle. "Whether knave, fool, or bedlamite, it is intolerable that the fellow should go at large."

"Pray, gentlemen, do my poor admirer no harm," said Lady Eleanore, with a faint and weary smile. "Take him out of my sight, if such be your pleasure; for I can find in my heart to do nothing but laugh at him; whereas, in all decency and conscience, it would become me to weep for the mischief I have wrought!"

But while the bystanders were attempting to lead away the unfortunate young man, he broke from them, and with a wild, impassioned earnestness, offered a new and equally strange petition to Lady Eleanore. It was no other than that she should throw off the mantle, which, while he pressed the silver cup of wine upon her, she had drawn more closely around her form, so as almost to shroud herself within it.

"Cast it from you!" exclaimed Jervase Helwyse, clasping his hands in an agony of entreaty. "It may not yet be too late! Give the accursed garment to the flames!"

But Lady Eleanore, with a laugh of scorn, drew the rich folds of the embroidered mantle over her head in such a fashion as to give a completely new aspect to her beautiful face, which—half hidden, half revealed—seemed to belong to some being of mysterious character and purposes.

"Farewell, Jervase Helwyse!" said she. "Keep my image in your remembrance as you behold it now."

"Alas, lady!" he replied, in a tone no longer wild, but sad as a funeral bell. "We must meet shortly, when your face may wear another aspect—and that shall be the image that must abide within me."

He made no more resistance to the violent efforts of the gentlemen and servants, who almost dragged him out of the apartment, and dismissed him roughly from the iron gate of the Province House. Captain Langford, who had been very active in this affair, was returning to the presence of Lady Eleanore Rochcliffe, when he encountered the physician, Doctor Clarke, with whom he had held some casual talk on the day of her arrival. The Doctor stood apart, separated from Lady Eleanore by the width of the room, but eyeing her with such keen sagacity that Captain Langford involuntarily gave him credit for the discovery of some deep secret.

"You appear to be smitten, after all, with the charms of this queenly maiden," said he, hoping thus to draw forth the physician's hidden knowledge.

"God forbid!" answered Doctor Clarke, with a grave smile; "and if you be wise, you will put up the same prayer for yourself. Woe to those who shall be smitten by this beautiful Lady Eleanore! But yonder stands the Governor—and I have a word or two for his private ear. Good night!"

He accordingly advanced to Governor Shute, and addressed him in so low a tone that none of the bystanders could catch a word of what he said; although the sudden change of His Excellency's hitherto cheerful visage betokened that the communication could be of no agreeable import. A very few moments afterwards, it was announced to the guests that an unforeseen circumstance rendered it necessary to put a premature close to the festival.

The ball at the Province House supplied a topic of conversation for the colonial metropolis for some days after its occurrence, and might still longer have been the general theme, only that a subject of all-engrossing interest thrust it, for a time, from the public recollection. This was the appearance of a dreadful epidemic, which, in that age, and long before and afterwards, was wont to slay its hundreds and thousands on both sides of the Atlantic. On the occasion of which we speak it was distinguished by a peculiar virulence, insomuch that it has left its traces—its pitmarks, to use an appropriate figure—on the history of the country, the affairs of which were thrown into confusion by its ravages.[13] At first, unlike its ordinary course, the disease seemed to confine itself to the higher circles of society, selecting its victims from among the proud, the well-born, and the wealthy, entering unabashed into stately chambers, and lying down with the slumberers in silken beds. Some of the most distinguished guests of the Province House—even those whom the haughty Lady Eleanore Rochcliffe had deemed not unworthy of her favor—were stricken by this fatal scourge. It was noticed, with an ungenerous bitterness of feeling, that the four gentlemen—the Virginian, the British officer, the young clergyman, and the Governor's secretary—who had been her most devoted attendants on the evening of the ball were the foremost on whom the plague-stroke fell. But the disease, pursuing its onward progress, soon ceased to be exclusively a prerogative of aristocracy. Its red brand was no longer conferred like a noble's star, or an order of knighthood. It threaded its way through the narrow and crooked streets, and entered the low, mean, darksome dwellings, and laid its hand of death upon the artisans and laboring classes of the town. It compelled rich and poor to feel themselves brethren then; and stalking to and fro across the Three Hills,[14] with a fierceness which made it almost a new pestilence, there was that mighty conqueror—that scourge and horror of our forefathers—the Smallpox!

We cannot estimate the affright which this plague inspired of yore, by contemplating it as the fangless monster of the present day. We must remember, rather, with what awe we watched the gigantic footsteps of the Asiatic cholera striding from shore to shore of the Atlantic, and marching like destiny upon cities far remote, which flight had already half depopulated. There is no other fear so horrible and unhumanizing as that which makes man dread to breathe heaven's vital air, lest it be poison, or to grasp the hand of a brother or friend, lest the gripe of the pestilence should clutch him. Such was the dismay that now followed in the track of the disease, or ran before it throughout the town. Graves were hastily dug, and the pestilential relics as hastily covered, because the dead were enemies of the living, and strove to draw them headlong, as it were, into their own dismal pit. The public councils were suspended, as if mortal wisdom might relinquish its devices now that an unearthly usurper had found his way into the ruler's mansion. Had an enemy's fleet been hovering on the coast, or his armies trampling on our soil, the people would probably have committed their defense to that same direful conqueror who had wrought their own calamity, and would permit no interference with his sway. This conqueror had a symbol of his triumphs. It was a blood-red flag, that fluttered in the tainted air over the door of every dwelling into which the smallpox had entered.

Such a banner was long since waving over the portal of Province House; for thence, as was proved by tracking its footsteps back, had all this dreadful mischief issued. It had been traced back to a lady's luxurious chamber—to the proudest of the proud—to her that was so delicate, and hardly owned herself of earthly mold—to the haughty one who took her stand above human sympathies—to Lady Eleanore! There remained no room for doubt that the contagion had lurked in that gorgeous mantle, which threw so strange a grace around her at the festival.

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[13] See Cotton Mather's *Diary*, pp. 62-64.

[14] Trimountaine was the early name given Boston (Cf. Tremont) because of the three-topped hill, afterwards named Beacon Hill.

Its fantastic splendor had been conceived in the delirious brain of a woman on her deathbed, and was the last toil of her stiffening fingers, which had interwoven fate and misery with its golden threads. This dark tale, whispered at first, was now bruited far and wide. The people raved against the Lady Eleanore, and cried out that her pride and scorn had evoked a fiend, and that between them both this monstrous evil had been born. At times their rage and despair took the semblance of grinning mirth; and whenever the red flag of the pestilence was hoisted over another, and yet another door, they clapped their hands and shouted through the streets, in bitter mockery: "Behold a new triumph for the Lady Eleanore!"

One day, in the midst of these dismal times, a wild figure approached the portal of the Province House, and folding his arms, stood contemplating the scarlet banner, which a passing breeze shook fitfully as if to fling abroad the contagion that it typified. At length, climbing one of the pillars by means of the iron balustrade, he took down the flag and entered the mansion, waving it above his head. At the foot of the staircase he met the Governor, booted and spurred, with his cloak drawn around him, evidently on the point of setting forth upon a journey.

"Wretched lunatic, what do you seek here?" exclaimed Shute, extending his cane to guard himself from contact. "There is nothing here but Death. Back—or you will meet him!"

"Death will not touch me, the banner-bearer of the pestilence!" cried Jervase Helwyse, shaking the red flag aloft. "Death and the Pestilence, who wears the aspect of the Lady Eleanore, will walk through the streets tonight, and I must march before them with this banner!"

"Why do I waste words on the fellow?" muttered the governor, drawing his cloak across his mouth. "What matters his miserable life, when none of us are sure of twelve hours' breath? On, fool, to your own destruction!"

He made way for Jervase Helwyse, who immediately ascended the staircase, but on the first landing-place was arrested by the firm grasp of a hand upon his shoulder. Looking fiercely up, with a madman's impulse to struggle with and rend asunder his opponent, he found himself powerless beneath a calm, stern eye, which possessed the mysterious property of quelling frenzy at its height. The person whom he had now encountered was the physician, Doctor Clarke, the duties of whose sad profession had led him to the Province House, where he was an infrequent guest in more prosperous times.

"Young man, what is your purpose?" demanded he.

"I seek the Lady Eleanore," answered Jervase Helwyse, submissively.

"All have fled from her," said the physician. "Why do you seek her now? I tell you, youth, her nurse fell death-stricken on the threshold of that fatal chamber. Know ye not that never came such a curse to our shores as this lovely Lady Eleanore?—that her breath has filled the air with poison?—that she has shaken pestilence and death upon the land from the folds of her accursed mantle?"

"Let me look upon her!" rejoined the mad youth, more wildly. "Let me behold her, in her awful beauty, clad in the regal garments of the pestilence! She and Death sit on a throne together. Let me kneel down before them!"

"Poor youth!" said Doctor Clarke; and, moved by a deep sense of human weakness, a smile of caustic humor curled his lip even then. "Wilt thou still worship the destroyer, and surround her image with fantasies the more magnificent the more evil she has wrought? Thus man doth ever to his tyrants. Approach, then! Madness, as I have noted, has that good efficacy that it will guard you from contagion—and perchance its own cure may be found in yonder chamber."

Ascending another flight of stairs, he threw open a door and signed to Jervase Helwyse that he should enter. The poor lunatic, it seems probable, had cherished a delusion that his haughty mistress sat in state, unharmed herself by the pestilential influence which, as by enchantment, she scattered round about her. He dreamed, no doubt, that her beauty was not dimmed, but brightened into superhuman splendor. With such anticipations he stole reverentially to the door at which the physician stood, but paused upon the threshold, gazing fearfully into the gloom of the darkened chamber.

"Where is the Lady Eleanore?" whispered he.

"Call her," replied the physician.

"Lady Eleanore!—Princess!—Queen of Death!" cried Jervase Helwyse, advancing three steps into the chamber. "She is not here! There, on yonder table, I behold the sparkle of a diamond which once she wore upon her bosom. There"—and he shuddered—"there hangs her mantle, on which a dead woman embroidered a spell of dreadful potency. But where is the Lady Eleanore?"

Something stirred within the silken curtains of a canopied bed; and a low moan was uttered, which, listening intently, Jervase Helwyse began to distinguish as a woman's voice, complaining dolefully of thirst. He fancied even that he recognized its tones.

"My throat!—my throat is scorched," murmured the voice. "A drop of water!"

"What thing art thou?" said the brain-stricken youth, drawing near the bed and tearing asunder its curtains. "Whose voice hast thou stolen for thy murmurs and miserable petitions, as if Lady Eleanore could be conscious of mortal infirmity? Fie! Heap of diseased mortality, why lurkest thou in my lady's chamber?"

"Oh, Jervase Helwyse," said the voice—and as it spoke the figure contorted itself, struggling to hide its blasted face—"look not now on the woman you once loved! The curse of Heaven hath stricken me, because I would not call man my brother, nor woman sister. I wrapt myself in PRIDE as in a MANTLE, and scorned the sympathies of nature; and therefore has nature made this wretched body the medium of a dreadful sympathy. You are avenged—they are all avenged—nature is avenged—for I am Eleanore Rochcliffe!"

The malice of his mental disease, the bitterness lurking at the bottom of his heart, mad as he was, for a blighted and ruined life, and love that had been paid with cruel scorn, awoke within the breast of Jervase Helwyse. He shook his finger at the wretched girl, and the chamber echoed, the curtains of the bed were shaken, with his outburst of insane merriment.

"Another triumph for the Lady Eleanore!" he cried. "All have been her victims! Who so worthy to be the final victim as herself?"

Impelled by some new fantasy of his crazed intellect, he snatched the fatal mantle, and rushed from the chamber and the house. That night a procession passed by torch-light through the streets, bearing in the midst the figure of a woman enveloped with a richly embroidered mantle; while in advance stalked Jervase Helwyse, waving the red flag of the pestilence. Arriving opposite the Province House, the mob burned the effigy, and a strong wind came and swept away the ashes. It was said that from that very hour the pestilence abated, as if its sway had some mysterious connection, from the first plague-stroke to the last, with Lady Eleanore's mantle. A remarkable uncertainty broods over that unhappy lady's fate. There is a belief, however, that, in a certain chamber of this mansion, a female form may sometimes be duskily discerned, shrinking into the darkest corner, and muffling her face within an embroidered mantle. Supposing the legend true, can this be other than the once proud Lady Eleanore?

Mine host, and the old loyalist, and I, bestowed no little warmth of applause upon this narrative, in which we had all been deeply interested; for the reader can scarcely conceive how unspeakably the effect of such a tale is heightened when, as in the present case, we may repose perfect confidence in the veracity of him who tells it. For my own part, knowing how scrupulous is Mr. Tiffany to settle the foundation of his facts, I could not have believed him one whit the more faithfully had he professed himself an eye-witness of the doings and sufferings of poor Lady Eleanore. Some skeptics, it is true, might demand documentary evidence, or even require him to produce the embroidered mantle, forgetting that—Heaven be praised—it was consumed to ashes. But now the old loyalist, whose blood was warmed by the good cheer, began to talk, in his turn, about the traditions of the Province House, and hinted that he, if it were agreeable, might add a few reminiscences to our legendary stock. Mr. Tiffany, having no cause to dread a rival, immediately besought him to favor us with a specimen; my own entreaties, of course, were urged to the same effect; and our venerable guest, well pleased to find willing auditors, awaited only the return of Mr. Thomas Waite, who had been summoned forth to provide accommodation for several new arrivals. Perchance the public—but be this as its own caprice and ours shall settle the matter—may read the result in another Tale of the Province House.

1842

From MOSSES FROM AN OLD MANSE

THE OLD MANSE[1]

Between two tall gateposts of rough-hewn stone (the gate itself having fallen from its hinges at some unknown epoch) we beheld the gray front of the old parsonage terminating the vista of an avenue of black ash trees. It was now a twelvemonth since the funeral procession of the venerable clergyman, its last inhabitant, had turned from that gateway towards the village burying ground. The wheel-track leading to the door as well as the whole breadth of the avenue, was almost overgrown with grass, affording dainty mouthfuls to two or three vagrant cows, and an old white horse who had his own living to pick up along the roadside. The glimmering shadows that lay half asleep between the door of the house and the public highway were a kind of spiritual medium, seen through which the edifice had not quite the aspect of belonging to the material world. Certainly it had little in common with those ordinary abodes which stand so imminent upon the road that every passer-by can thrust his head, as it were, into the domestic circle. From these quiet windows the figures of passing travelers looked too remote and dim to disturb the sense of privacy. In its near retirement and accessible seclusion it was the very spot for the residence of a clergyman,—a man not estranged from human life, yet enveloped, in the midst of it, with a veil woven of intermingled gloom and brightness. It was worthy to have been one of the time-honored parsonages of England in which, through many generations, a succession of holy occupants pass from youth to age, and bequeath each an inheritance of sanctity to pervade the house and hover over it as with an atmosphere.

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[1] Back some distance from the street, and surrounded by great elms, there still stands, in Concord, Mass., the Old Manse, or parsonage, first built by the Rev. William Emerson in 1765, and occupied by Emerson during one year (1834-35) and by Hawthorne during the first three years (1842-45) of his married life. The friends that occasionally entered this "Para-

Nor, in truth, had the Old Manse ever been profaned by a lay occupant until that memorable summer afternoon when I entered it as my home. A priest had built it; a priest had succeeded to it; other priestly men from time to time had dwelt in it; and children born in its chambers had grown up to assume the priestly character. It was awful to reflect how many sermons must have been written there. The latest inhabitant alone—he by whose translation to paradise the dwelling was left vacant—had penned nearly three thousand discourses, besides the better, if not the greater, number that gushed living from his lips. How often, no doubt, had he paced to and fro along the avenue, attuning his meditations to the sighs and gentle murmurs and deep and solemn peals of the wind among the lofty tops of the trees! In that variety of natural utterances he could find something accordant with every passage of his sermon, were it of tenderness or reverential fear. The boughs over my head seemed shadowy with solemn thoughts as well as with rustling leaves. I took shame to myself for having been so long a writer of idle stories, and ventured to hope that wisdom would descend upon me with the falling leaves of the avenue, and that I should light upon an intellectual treasure in the Old Manse well worth those hoards of long-hidden gold which people seek for in moss-grown houses. Profound treatises of morality; a layman's unprofessional, and therefore unprejudiced, views of religion; histories (such as Bancroft[2] might have written had he taken up his abode here as he once proposed) bright with picture, gleaming over a depth of philosophic thought,—these were the works that might fitly have flowed from such a retirement. In the humblest event, I resolved at least to achieve a novel that should evolve some deep lesson and should possess physical substance enough to stand alone.

In furtherance of my design, and as if to leave me no pretext for not fulfilling it, there was in the rear of the house the most delightful little nook of a study that ever afforded its snug seclusion to a scholar. It was here that Emerson wrote *Nature;* for he was then an inhabitant of the Manse, and used to watch the Assyrian dawn and Paphian sunset[3] and moonrise from the summit of our eastern hill. When I first saw the room its walls were blackened with the smoke of unnumbered years and made still blacker by the grim prints of Puritan ministers that hung around. These worthies looked strangely like bad angels, or at least like men who had wrestled so continually and so sternly with the devil that somewhat of his sooty fierceness had been imparted to their own visages. They had all vanished now; a cheerful coat of paint and golden tinted paper-

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dise," as the Hawthornes named it, included George S. Hillard, the Boston lawyer and journalist; William Ellery Channing, a poet and journalist, the nephew of the more famous William Ellery Channing; Margaret Fuller; Horatio Bridge, of the U. S. navy, whose *Journal of an African Cruiser* Hawthorne edited; Franklin Pierce, later President of the United States; and Thoreau and Emerson. From the upstairs study at the rear, in which Emerson had written *Nature,* and where Hawthorne wrote the *Mosses,* there can be seen the river where Hawthorne and Emerson skated together, and the Concord Bridge, where was shed almost the first blood in the Revolution. The essay descriptive of the manse was written last to introduce the stories and essays—some of them written much earlier—which make up the book called *Mosses from an Old Manse.*

[2] The American historian. See p. 479.

[3] Emerson says in *Nature,* "Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous. The dawn is my Assyria; the sunset and moonrise my Paphos, and unimaginable realms of faerie." Paphos was a city in western Cyprus.

hangings lighted up the small apartment; while the shadow of a willow tree that swept against the overhanging eaves attempered the cheery western sunshine. In place of the grim prints there was the sweet and lovely head of one of Raphael's Madonnas and two pleasant little pictures of the Lake of Como. The only other decorations were a purple vase of flowers, always fresh, and a bronze one containing graceful ferns. My books (few, and by no means choice; for they were chiefly such waifs as chance had thrown in my way) stood in order about the room, seldom to be disturbed.

The study had three windows, set with little old-fashioned panes of glass, each with a crack across it. The two on the western side looked, or rather peeped between the willow branches, down into the orchard, with glimpses of the river through the trees. The third, facing northward, commanded a broader view of the river, at a spot where its hitherto obscure waters gleam forth into the light of history. It was at this window that the clergyman who then dwelt in the Manse stood watching the outbreak of a long and deadly struggle between two nations; he saw the irregular array of his parishioners on the farther side of the river and the glittering line of the British on the hither bank. He awaited, in an agony of suspense, the rattle of the musketry. It came; and there needed but a gentle wind to sweep the battle smoke around this quiet house.

Perhaps the reader, whom I cannot help considering as my guest in the Old Manse and entitled to all courtesy in the way of sight-showing,—perhaps he will choose to take a nearer view of the memorable spot. We stand now on the river's brink. It may well be called the Concord, the river of peace and quietness; for it is certainly the most unexcitable and sluggish stream that ever loitered imperceptibly towards its eternity—the sea. Positively I had lived three weeks beside it before it grew quite clear to my perception which way the current flowed. It never has a vivacious aspect except when a northwestern breeze is vexing its surface on a sunshiny day. From the incurable indolence of its nature, the stream is happily incapable of becoming the slave of human ingenuity, as is the fate of so many a wild, free mountain torrent. While all things else are compelled to subserve some useful purpose, it idles its sluggish life away in lazy liberty, without turning a solitary spindle or affording even water power enough to grind the corn that grows upon its banks. The torpor of its movement allows it nowhere a bright, pebbly shore, nor so much as a narrow strip of glistening sand, in any part of its course. It slumbers between broad prairies, kissing the long meadow grass, and bathes the overhanging boughs of elder bushes and willows or the roots of elms and ash trees and clumps of maples. Flags and rushes grow along its plashy shore; the yellow water lily spreads its broad, flat leaves on the margin; and the fragrant white pond-lily abounds, generally selecting a position just so far from the river's brink that it cannot be grasped save at the hazard of plunging in.

It is a marvel whence this perfect flower derives its loveliness and perfume, springing as it does from the black mud over which the river sleeps, and where lurk the slimy eel, and speckled frog, and the mud turtle, whom continual washing cannot cleanse. It is the very same black mud out of which the yellow lily sucks its obscene life and noisome odor. Thus we see, too, in the world that some persons assimilate only what is ugly and evil from the same moral circumstances which supply good and beautiful results—the fragrance of celestial flowers—to the daily life of others.

The reader must not, from any testimony of mine, contract a dislike towards our slumberous stream. In the light of a calm and golden sunset it becomes lovely beyond expression; the more lovely for the quietude that so well accords with the hour, when even the wind, after blustering all day long, usually hushes itself to rest. Each tree and rock and every blade of grass is distinctly imaged, and, however unsightly in reality, assumes ideal beauty in the reflection. The minutest things of earth and the broad aspect of the firmament are pictured equally without effort and with the same felicity of success. All the sky glows downward at our feet; the rich clouds float through the unruffled bosom of the stream like heavenly thoughts through a peaceful heart. We will not, then, malign our river as gross and impure while it can glorify itself with so adequate a picture of the heaven that broods above it; or, if we remember its tawny hue and the muddiness of its bed, let it be a symbol that the earthliest human soul has an infinite spiritual capacity and may contain the better world within its depths. But, indeed, the same lesson might be drawn out of any mud puddle in the streets of a city; and, being taught us everywhere, it must be true.

Come, we have pursued a somewhat devious track in our walk to the battle-ground.

Here we are, at the point where the river was crossed by the old bridge, the possession of which was the immediate object of the contest. On the hither side grow two or three elms, throwing a wide circumference of shade, but which must have been planted at some period within the threescore years and ten that have passed since the battle day. On the farther shore, overhung by a clump of elder bushes, we discern the stone abutment of the bridge. Looking down into the river, I once discovered some heavy fragments of the timbers, all green with half a century's growth of water moss; for during that length of time the tramp of horses and human footsteps have ceased along this ancient highway. The stream has here about the breadth of twenty strokes of a swimmer's arm—a space not too wide when the bullets were whistling across. Old people who dwell hereabouts will point out the very spots on the western bank where our countrymen fell down and died; and on this side of the river an obelisk of granite has grown up from the soil that was fertilized with British blood. The monument, not more than twenty feet in height, is such as it befitted the inhabitants of a village to erect in illustration of a matter of local interest rather than what was suitable to commemorate an epoch of national history. Still, by the fathers of the village this famous deed was done; and their descendants might rightfully claim the privilege of building a memorial.

A humbler token of the fight, yet a more interesting one than the granite obelisk, may be seen close under the stone wall which separates the battle-ground from the precincts of the parsonage. It is the grave—marked by a small, mossgrown fragment of stone at the head and another at the foot—the grave of two British soldiers who were slain in the skirmish, and have ever since slept peacefully where Zechariah Brown and Thomas Davis buried them. Soon was their warfare ended; a weary night march from Boston, a rattling volley of musketry across the river, and then these many years of rest. In the long procession of slain invaders who passed into eternity from the battle-fields of the Revolution, these two nameless soldiers led the way.

Lowell, the poet, as we were once standing over this grave, told me a tradition in reference to one of the inhabitants below. The story has something deeply impressive, though its circumstances cannot altogether be reconciled with probability. A youth in the service of the clergyman happened to be chopping wood, that April morning, at the back door of the Manse, and when the noise of battle rang from side to side of the bridge he hastened across the intervening field to see what might be going forward. It is rather strange, by the way, that this lad should have been so diligently at work when the whole population of town and country were startled out of their customary business by the advance of the British troops. Be that as it might, the tradition says that the lad now left his task and hurried to the battle-field with the axe still in his hand. The British had by this time retreated, the Americans were in pursuit; and the late scene of strife was thus deserted by both parties. Two soldiers lay on the ground—one was a corpse; but, as the young New Englander drew nigh, the other Briton raised himself painfully upon his hands and knees and gave a ghastly stare into his face. The boy,—it must have been a nervous impulse, without purpose, without thought, and betokening a sensitive and impressible nature rather than a hardened one,—the boy uplifted his axe and dealt the wounded soldier a fierce and fatal blow upon the head.

I could wish that the grave might be opened; for I would fain know whether either of the skeleton soldiers has the mark of an axe in his skull. The story comes home to me like truth. Oftentimes, as an intellectual and moral exercise, I have sought to follow that poor youth through his subsequent career, and observe how his soul was tortured by the blood stain, contracted as it had been before the long custom of war had robbed human life of its sanctity and while it still seemed murderous to slay a brother man. This one circumstance has borne more fruit for me than all that history tells us of the fight.

Many strangers come in the summer time to view the battle-ground. For my own part, I have never found my imagination much excited by this or any other scene of historic celebrity; nor would the placid margin of the river have lost any of its charm for me had men never fought and died there. There is a wilder interest in the tract of land—perhaps a hundred yards in breadth—which extends between the battle-field and the northern face of our Old Manse with its contiguous avenue and orchard. Here, in some unknown age, before the white man came, stood an Indian village, convenient to the river, whence its inhabitants must have drawn so large a part of their subsistence. The site is identified by the spear and arrow heads, the chisels, and other implements of war, labor, and the chase, which the plow turns up from the soil. You see a splinter of stone, half hidden beneath a sod; it looks like nothing worthy of note; but, if you have faith enough to pick it up, behold a relic! Thoreau, who has a strange faculty of finding what the Indians have left behind them, first set me on the search; and I afterwards enriched myself with some very perfect specimens, so rudely wrought that it seemed almost as if chance had fashioned them. Their great charm consists in this rudeness and in the individuality of each article, so different from the productions of civilized machinery, which shapes everything on one pattern. There is exquisite delight, too, in picking up for one's self an arrow head that was dropped centuries ago and has never been handled since, and which we thus receive directly from the hand of the red hunter, who purposed to shoot it at his game or at an enemy. Such an incident builds up again the Indian village and its encircling forest, and recalls to life the painted chiefs and warriors, the squaws at their household toil, and the children sporting among the wigwams, while the little wind-rocked pappoose swings from the branch of a tree. It can hardly be told whether it is a joy or a pain, after such a momentary vision, to gaze around in the broad daylight of reality and see stone fences, white houses, potato fields, and men doggedly hoeing in their shirt sleeves and homespun pantaloons. But this is nonsense. The Old Manse is better than a thousand wigwams.

The Old Manse! We had almost forgotten it, but will return thither through the orchard. This was set out by the last clergyman, in the decline of his life, when the neighbors laughed at the hoary-headed man for planting trees from which he could have no prospect of gathering fruit. Even had that been the case, there was only so much the better motive for planting them, in the pure and unselfish hope of benefiting his successors,—an end so seldom achieved by more ambitious efforts. But the old minister, before reaching his patriarchal age of ninety, ate the apples from this orchard during many years, and added silver and gold to his annual stipend by disposing of the superfluity. It is pleasant to think of him walking among the trees in the quiet afternoons of early autumn and picking up here and there a windfall, while he observes how heavily the branches are weighed down, and computes the number of empty flour barrels that will be filled by their burden. He loved each tree, doubtless, as if it had been his own child. An orchard has a relation to mankind, and readily connects itself with matters of the heart. The trees possess a domestic character; they have lost the wild nature of their forest kindred, and have grown humanized by receiving the care of man as well as by contributing to his wants. There is so much individuality of character, too, among apple trees that it gives them an additional claim to be the objects of human interest. One is harsh and crabbed in its manifestations; another gives us fruit as mild as charity. One is churlish and illiberal, evidently grudging the few apples that it bears; another exhausts itself in freehearted benevolence. The variety of grotesque shapes into which apple trees contort themselves has its effect on those who get acquainted with them: they stretch out their crooked branches, and take such hold of the imagination that we remember them as humorists and odd fellows. And what is more melancholy than the old apple trees that linger about the spot where once stood a homestead, but where there is now only a ruined chimney rising out of a grassy and weedgrown cellar? They offer their fruit to every wayfarer,—apples that are bitter sweet with the moral of Time's vicissitude.

I have met with no other such pleasant trouble in the world as that of finding myself, with only the two or three mouths which it was my privilege to feed, the sole inheritor of the old clergyman's wealth of fruits. Throughout the summer there were cherries and currants; and then came autumn, with his immense burden of apples, dropping them continually from his overladen shoulders as he trudged along. In the stillest afternoon, if I listened, the thump of a great apple was audible, falling without a breath of wind, from the mere necessity of perfect ripeness. And, besides, there were pear trees, that flung down bushels upon bushels of heavy pears; and peach trees, which, in a good year, tormented me with peaches, neither to be eaten nor kept, nor, without labor and perplexity, to be given away. The idea of an infinite generosity and exhaustless bounty on the part of our Mother Nature was well worth obtaining through such cares as these. That feeling can be enjoyed in perfection only by the natives of summer islands where the bread-fruit, the cocoa, the palm and the orange grow spontaneously and hold forth the ever-ready meal; but likewise almost as well by a man long habituated to city life, who plunges into such a solitude as that of the Old Manse, where he plucks the fruit of trees that he did not plant, and which therefore, to my heterodox taste, bear the closest resemblance to those that grew in Eden. It has been an apothegm these five thousand years, that toil sweetens the bread it earns. For my part, (speaking from hard experience, acquired while belaboring the rugged furrows of Brook Farm[4]), I relish best the free gifts of Providence.

Not that it can be disputed that the light toil requisite to cultivate a moderately-sized garden imparts such zest to kitchen vegetables as is never found in those of the market gardener. Childless men, if they would know something of the bliss of paternity, should plant a seed,—be it squash, bean, Indian corn, or perhaps a mere flower or worthless weed,—should plant it with their own hands, and nurse it from infancy to maturity altogether by their own care. If there be not too many of them, each individual plant becomes an object of separate interest. My garden, that skirted the avenue of the Manse, was of precisely the right extent. An hour or two of morning labor was all that it required. But I used to visit and revisit it a dozen times a day, and stand in deep contemplation over my vegetable progeny with a love that nobody could share or conceive of, who had never taken part in the process of creation. It was one of the most bewitching sights in the world to observe a hill of beans thrusting aside the soil, or a row of early peas just peeping forth sufficiently to trace a line of delicate green. Later in the season the humming-birds were attracted by the blossoms of a peculiar variety of bean; and they were a joy to me, those little spiritual visitants, for deigning to sip airy food out of my nectar cups. Multitudes of bees used to bury themselves in the yellow blossoms of the summer squashes. This, too, was a deep satisfaction; although, when they had laden themselves with sweets, they flew away to some unknown hive, which would give back nothing in requital of what my garden had contributed. But I was glad thus to fling a benefaction upon the passing breeze with the certainty that somebody must profit by it, and that there would be a little more honey in the world to allay the sourness and bitterness which mankind is always complaining of. Yes, indeed; my life was the sweeter for that honey.

Speaking of summer squashes, I must say a word of their beautiful and varied forms. They presented an endless diversity of urns and vases, shallow or deep, scalloped or plain, moulded in patterns which a sculptor would do well to copy, since Art has never invented any thing more graceful. A hundred squashes in the garden were worthy, in my eyes at least, of being rendered indestructible in marble. If ever Providence (but I know it never will) should assign me a superfluity of gold, part of it shall be expended for a service of plate, or most delicate porcelain, to be wrought into the shapes of summer squashes gathered from vines which I will plant with my own hands. As dishes for containing vegetables, they would be peculiarly appropriate.

But not merely the squeamish love of the beautiful was gratified by my toil in the kitchen garden. There was a hearty enjoyment, likewise, in observing the growth of the crook-necked winter squashes, from the first little bulb, with the withered blossom adhering to it, until they lay strewn upon the soil, big, round fellows, hiding their heads beneath the leaves, but turning up their great yellow rotundities to the noontide sun. Gazing at them, I felt that by my agency something worth living for had been done. A new substance was born into the world. They were real and tangible existences, which the mind could seize hold of and rejoice in. A cabbage, too,—especially the early Dutch cabbage, which swells to a monstrous circumference, until its ambitious heart often bursts asunder,—is a matter to be proud of when we can claim a share with the earth and sky in producing it. But, after all, the hugest pleasure is reserved until these vegetable children of ours are smoking on the table, and we, like Saturn, make a meal of them.

What with the river, the battle field, the orchard and the garden the reader begins to despair of finding his way back into the Old Manse. But, in agreeable weather, it is the truest hospitality to keep him out of doors. I never grew quite acquainted with my habitation till a long spell of sulky rain had confined me beneath its roof. There could not be a more somber aspect of external nature than as then seen from the windows of my study. The great willow tree had caught and retained among its leaves a whole cataract of water, to be shaken down at intervals by the frequent gusts of wind. All day long, and for a week together, the rain was drip-drip-

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[4] Brook Farm in West Roxbury, Mass., was the scene of an attempt on the part of a group of philosophers so to combine plain living and high thinking as to solve the problems of life by the establishment of an ideal community. Hawthorne remained there some months, and like the other enthusiasts did hard manual work on the farm.

dripping and splash-splash-splashing from the eaves and bubbling and foaming into the tubs beneath the spouts. The old, unpainted shingles of the house and out buildings were black with moisture; and the mosses of ancient growth upon the walls looked green and fresh, as if they were the newest things and afterthought of Time. The usually mirrored surface of the river was blurred by an infinity of raindrops; the whole landscape had a completely water-soaked appearance, conveying the impression that the earth was wet through like a sponge; while the summit of a wooded hill, about a mile distant, was enveloped in a dense mist, where the demon of the tempest seemed to have his abiding-place and to be plotting still direr inclemencies.

Nature has no kindness, no hospitality, during a rain. In the fiercest heat of sunny days she retains a secret mercy, and welcomes the wayfarer to shady nooks of the woods whither the sun cannot penetrate; but she provides no shelter against her storms. It makes us shiver to think of those deep, umbrageous recesses, those overshadowing banks, where we found such enjoyment during the sultry afternoons. Not a twig of foliage there but would dash a little shower into our faces. Looking reproachfully towards the impenetrable sky,—if sky there be above that dismal uniformity of cloud,—we are apt to murmur against the whole system of the universe, since it involves the extinction of so many summer days in so short a life by the hissing and spluttering rain. In such spells of weather—and it is to be supposed such weather came—Eve's bower in paradise must have been but a cheerless and aguish kind of shelter, nowise comparable to the old parsonage, which had resources of its own to beguile the week's imprisonment. The idea of sleeping on a couch of wet roses!

Happy the man who in a rainy day can betake himself to a huge garret, stored, like that of the Manse with lumber that each generation has left behind it from a period before the revolution. Our garret was an arched hall, dimly illuminated through small and dusty windows; it was but a twilight at the best, and there were nooks, or rather caverns, of deep obscurity, the secrets of which I never learned, being too reverent of their dust and cobwebs. The beams and rafters roughly hewn and with strips of bark still on them and the rude masonry of the chimneys, made the garret look wild and uncivilized,—an aspect unlike what was seen elsewhere in the quiet and decorous old house. But on one side there was a little whitewashed apartment, which bore the traditionary title of the Saint's Chamber, because holy men in their youth had slept, and studied, and prayed there. With its elevated retirement, its one window, its small fireplace, and its closet convenient for an oratory,[5] it was the very spot where a young man might inspire himself with solemn enthusiasm and cherish saintly dreams. The occupants, at various epochs, had left brief records and ejaculations inscribed upon the walls. There, too, hung a tattered and shriveled roll of canvas, which on inspection proved to be the forcibly wrought picture of a clergyman, in wig, band, and gown, holding a Bible in his hand. As I turned his face towards the light he eyed me with an air of authority such as men of his profession seldom assume in our days. The original[6] had been pastor of the parish more than a century ago, a friend of Whitefield, and almost his equal in fervid eloquence. I bowed before the effigy of the dignified divine, and felt as if I had now met face to face with the ghost by whom, as there was reason to apprehend, the Manse was haunted.

Houses of any antiquity in New England are so invariably possessed with spirits that the matter seems hardly worth alluding to. Our ghost used to heave deep sighs in a particular corner of the parlor, and sometimes rustled paper, as if he were turning over a sermon in the long upper entry—where nevertheless he was invisible, in spite of the bright moonshine that fell through the eastern window. Not improbably he wished me to edit and publish a selection from a chest full of manuscript discourses that stood in the garret. Once, while Hillard and other friends sat talking with us in the twilight, there came a rustling noise as of a minister's silk gown, sweeping through the very midst of the company, so closely as almost to brush against the chairs. Still there was nothing visible. A yet stranger business was that of a ghostly servant maid, who used to be heard in the kitchen at deepest midnight, grinding coffee, cooking, ironing,—performing, in short, all kinds of domestic labor,—although no traces of anything accomplished could be detected the next morning. Some neglected duty of her servitude—some ill-starched ministerial band—disturbed the poor damsel in her grave and kept her at work without any wages.

But to return from this digression. A part of my predecessor's library was stored in the garret,—no unfit receptacle indeed for such dreary trash as comprised the greater number of volumes. The old books would have been worth nothing at an auction. In this venerable garret, however, they possessed an interest, quite apart from their literary value, as heirlooms, many of which had been transmitted down through a series of consecrated hands from the days of the mighty Puritan divines. Autographs of famous names were to be seen in faded ink on some of their flyleaves; and there were marginal observations or interpolated pages closely covered with manuscript in illegible shorthand, perhaps concealing matter of profound truth and wisdom. The world will never be the better for it. A few of the books were Latin folios, written by Catholic authors; others demolished Papistry, as with a sledge-hammer, in plain English. A dissertation on the book of Job—which only Job himself could have had patience to read —filled at least a score of small, thickset quartos, at the rate of two or three volumes to a chapter. Then there was a vast folio body of divinity—too corpulent a body, it might be feared, to comprehend the spiritual element of religion. Volumes of this form dated back two hundred years or more, and were generally bound in black leather, exhibiting precisely such an appearance as we should attribute to books of enchantment. Others equally antique were of a size proper to be carried in the large waistcoat pockets of old times,—diminutive, but as black as their bulkier brethren, and abundantly interfused with Greek and Latin quotations. These little old volumes impressed me as if they had been intended for very large ones, but had been unfortunately blighted at an early stage of their growth.

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[5] A small private chapel for prayer.

[6] Very possibly Dr. Bliss, predecessor to Rev. William Emerson, grandfather of Ralph Waldo Emerson. George Whitefield, 1714-1770, was one of the founders of Methodism.

The rain pattered upon the roof and the sky gloomed through the dusty garret windows while I burrowed among these venerable books in search of any living thought which should burn like a coal of fire or glow like an inextinguishable gem, beneath the dead trumpery that had long hidden it. But I found no such treasure; all was dead alike; and I could not but muse deeply and wonderingly upon the humiliating fact that the works of man's intellect decay like those of his hands. Thought grows moldy. What was good and nourishing food for the spirits of one generation affords no sustenance for the next. Books of religion, however, cannot be considered a fair test of the enduring and vivacious properties of human thought, because such books so seldom really touch upon their ostensible subject, and have, therefore, so little business to be written at all. So long as an unlettered soul can attain to saving grace there would seem to be no deadly error in holding theological libraries to be accumulations of, for the most part, stupendous impertinence.

Many of the books had accrued in the latter years of the last clergyman's lifetime. These threatened to be of even less interest than the elder works a century hence to any curious inquirer who should then rummage them as I was doing now. Volumes of the *Liberal Preacher* and *Christian Examiner*, occasional sermons, controversial pamphlets, tracts, and other productions of a like fugitive nature took the place of the thick and heavy volumes of past time. In a physical point of view, there was much the same difference as between a feather and a lump of lead; but, intellectually regarded, the specific gravity of old and new was about upon a par. Both also were alike frigid. The elder books nevertheless seemed to have been earnestly written, and might be conceived to have possessed warmth at some former period; although, with the lapse of time, the heated masses had cooled down even to the freezing point. The frigidity of the modern productions, on the other hand, was characteristic and inherent, and evidently had little to do with the writer's qualities of mind and heart. In fine, of this whole dusty heap of literature I tossed aside all the sacred part, and felt myself none the less a Christian for eschewing it. There appeared no hope of either mounting to the better world on a Gothic staircase of ancient folios or of flying thither on the wings of a modern tract.[7]

Nothing, strange to say, retained any sap except what had been written for the passing day and year without the remotest pretension or idea of permanence. There were a few old newspapers, and still older almanacs, which reproduced to my mental eye the epochs when they had issued from the press with a distinctness that was altogether unaccountable. It was as if I had found bits of magic looking-glass among the books with the images of a vanished century in them. I turned my eyes towards the tattered picture above mentioned, and asked of the austere divine wherefore it was that he and his brethren, after the most painful rummaging and groping into their minds, had been able to produce nothing half so real as these newspaper scribblers and almanac makers had thrown off in the effervescence of a moment. The portrait responded not; so I sought an answer for myself. It is the age itself that writes newspapers and almanacs, which therefore have a distinct purpose and meaning at the time, and a kind of intelligible truth for all times; whereas most other works—being written by men who, in the very act, set themselves apart from their age—are likely to possess little significance when new, and none at all when old. Genius, indeed, melts many ages into one and thus effects something permanent, yet still with a similarity of office to that of the more ephemeral writer. A work of genius is but the newspaper of a century, or perchance of a hundred centuries.

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[7] Hawthorne seems to contrast medieval and modern theology.

Lightly as I have spoken of these old books, there yet lingers with me a superstitious reverence for literature of all kinds. A bound volume has a charm in my eyes similar to what scraps of manuscript possess for the good Mussulman. He imagines that those wind-wafted records are perhaps hallowed by some sacred verse; and I, that every new book or antique one may contain the "open sesame,"—the spell to disclose treasures hidden in some unsuspected cave of Truth. Thus it was not without sadness that I turned away from the library of the Old Manse.

Blessed was the sunshine when it came again at the close of another stormy day, beaming from the edge of the western horizon; while the massive firmament of clouds threw down all the gloom it could, but served only to kindle the golden light into a more brilliant glow by the strongly contrasted shadows. Heaven smiled at the earth, so long unseen, from beneath its heavy eyelid. Tomorrow for the hill tops and the wood paths.

Or it might be that Ellery Channing came up the avenue to join me in a fishing excursion on the river. Strange and happy times were those when we cast aside all irksome forms and strait-laced habitudes and delivered ourselves up to the free air, to live like the Indians or any less conventional race during one bright semicircle of the sun. Rowing our boats against the current, between wide meadows, we turned aside into the Assabeth. A more lovely stream than this, for a mile above its junction with the Concord, has never flowed on earth,—nowhere, indeed, except to lave the interior regions of a poet's imagination. It is sheltered from the breeze by woods and a hillside; so that elsewhere there might be a hurricane, and here scarcely a ripple across the shaded water. The current lingers along so gently that the mere force of the boatman's will seems sufficient to propel his craft against it. It comes flowing softly through the midmost privacy and deepest heart of a wood which whispers it to be quiet; while the stream whispers back again from its sedgy borders, as if river and wood were hushing one another to sleep. Yes; the river sleeps along its course and dreams of the sky and of the clustering foliage, amid which fall showers of broken sunlight, imparting specks of vivid cheerfulness, in contrast with the quiet depth of the prevailing tint. Of all this scene, the slumbering river has a dream picture in its bosom. Which, after all, was the most real—the picture, or the original?—the objects palpable to our grosser senses, or their apotheosis in the stream beneath? Surely the disembodied images stand in closer relation to the soul. But both the original and the reflection had here an ideal charm; and, had it been a thought more wild, I could have fancied that this river had strayed forth out of the rich scenery of my companion's inner world; only the vegetation along its banks should then have had an Oriental character.

Gentle and unobtrusive as the river is, yet the tranquil woods seem hardly satisfied to allow it passage. The trees are rooted on the very verge of the water, and dip their pendent branches into it. At one spot there is a lofty bank, on the slope of which grow some hemlocks, declining across the stream with outstretched arms, as if resolute to take the plunge. In other places the banks are almost on a level with the water; so that the quiet congregation of trees set their feet in the flood, and are fringed with foliage down to the surface. Cardinal flowers kindle their spiral flames and illuminate the dark nooks among the shrubbery. The pond-lily grows abundantly along the margin—that delicious flower, which, as Thoreau tells me, opens its virgin bosom to the first sunlight and perfects its being through the magic of that genial kiss. He has beheld beds of them unfolding in due succession as the sunrise stole gradually from flower to flower—a sight not to be hoped for unless when a poet adjusts his inward eye to a proper focus with the outward organ. Grapevines here and there twine themselves around shrub and tree and hang their clusters over the water within reach of the boatman's hand. Oftentimes they unite two trees of alien race in an inextricable twine, marrying the hemlock and the maple against their will and enriching them with a purple offspring of which neither is the parent. One of these ambitious parasites has climbed into the upper branches of a tall white pine, and is still ascending from bough to bough, unsatisfied till it shall crown the tree's airy summit with a wreath of its broad foliage and a cluster of its grapes.

The winding course of the stream continually shut out the scene behind us and revealed as calm and lovely a one before. We glided from depth to depth and breathed new seclusion at every turn. The shy kingfisher flew from the withered branch close at hand to another at a distance, uttering a shrill cry of anger or alarm. Ducks that had been floating there since the preceding eve were startled at our approach and skimmed along the glassy river, breaking its dark surface with a bright streak. The pickerel leaped from among the lily pads. The turtle, sunning itself upon a rock or at the root of a tree, slid suddenly into the water with a plunge. The painted Indian who paddled his canoe along the Assabeth three hundred years ago could hardly have seen a wilder gentleness displayed upon its banks and reflected in its bosom than we did. Nor could the same Indian have prepared his noontide meal with more simplicity. We drew up our skiff at some point where the overarching shade formed a natural bower, and there kindled a fire with the pine cones and decayed branches that lay strewn plentifully around. Soon the smoke ascended among the trees, impregnated with a savory incense, not heavy, dull, and surfeiting, like the steam of cookery within doors, but sprightly and piquant. The smell of our feast was akin to the woodland odors with which it mingled: there was no sacrilege committed by our intrusion there: the sacred solitude was hospitable, and granted us free leave to cook and eat in the recess that was at once our kitchen and banqueting hall. It is strange what humble offices may be performed in a beautiful scene without destroying its poetry. Our fire, red-gleaming among the trees, and we beside it, busied with culinary rites and spreading out our meal on a mossgrown log, all seemed in unison with the river gliding by and the foliage rustling over us. And, what was strangest, neither did our mirth seem to disturb the propriety of the solemn woods; although the hobgoblins of the old wilderness and the will-of-the wisps that glimmered in the marshy places might have come trooping to share our table talk and have added their shrill laughter to our merriment. It was the very spot in which to utter the extremest nonsense or the profoundest wisdom, or that ethereal product of the mind which partakes of both, and may become one or the other, in correspondence with the faith and insight of the auditor.

So, amid sunshine and shadow, rustling leaves and sighing waters, up gushed our talk like the babble of a fountain. The evanescent spray was Ellery's; and his, too, the lumps of golden thought that lay glimmering in the fountain's bed and brightened both our faces by the reflection. Could he have drawn out that virgin gold, and stamped it with the mint mark that alone gives currency, the world might have had the profit, and he the fame. My mind was the richer merely by the knowledge that it was there. But the chief profit of those wild days, to him and me, lay, not in any definite idea, not in any angular or rounded truth, which we dug out of the shapeless mass of problematical stuff, but in the freedom which we thereby won from all custom and conventionalism and fettering influences of man on man. We were so free today that it was impossible to be slaves again tomorrow. When we crossed the threshold of the house or trod the thronged pavements of a city, still the leaves of the trees that overhang the Assabeth were whispering to us, "Be free! be free!" Therefore along that shady river bank there are spots, marked with a heap of ashes and half-consumed brands, only less sacred in my remembrance than the hearth of a household fire.

And yet how sweet, as we floated homeward adown the golden river at sunset,—how sweet was it to return within the system of human society, not as to a dungeon and a chain, but as to a stately edifice, whence we could go forth at will into statelier simplicity! How gently, too, did the sight of the Old Manse, best seen from the river, overshadowed with its willow, and all environed about with the foliage of its orchard and avenue,—how gently did its gray, homely aspect rebuke the speculative extravagances of the day! It had grown sacred in connection with the artificial life against which we inveighed; it had been a home for many years in spite of all; it was my home too; and, with these thoughts, it seemed to me that all the artifice and conventionalism of life was but an impalpable thinness upon its surface, and that the depth below was none the worse for it. Once, as we turned our boat to the bank, there was a cloud, in the shape of an immensely gigantic figure of a hound, couched above the house, as if keeping guard over it. Gazing at this symbol, I prayed that the upper influences might long protect the institutions that had grown out of the heart of mankind.

If ever my readers should decide to give up civilized life, cities, houses, and whatever moral or material enormities in addition to these the perverted ingenuity of our race has contrived, let it be in the early autumn. Then Nature will love him better than at any other season, and will take him to her bosom with a more motherly tenderness. I could scarcely endure the roof of the old house above me in those first autumnal days. How early in the summer, too, the prophecy of autumn comes! Earlier in some years than in others; sometimes even in the first weeks of July. There is no other feeling like what is caused by this faint, doubtful, yet real perception—if it be not rather a foreboding—of the year's decay, so blessedly sweet and sad in the same breath.

Did I say that there was no feeling like it? Ah, but there is a half-acknowledged melancholy like to this when we stand in the perfected vigor of our life and feel that Time has now given us all his flowers, and that the next work of his never idle fingers must be to steal them one by one away.

I have forgotten whether the song of the cricket be not as early a token of autumn's approach as any other,—that song which may be called an audible stillness; for though very loud and heard afar, yet the mind does not take note of it as a sound, so completely is its individual existence merged among the accompanying characteristics of the season. Alas for the pleasant summer time! In August the grass is still verdant on the hills and in the valleys; the foliage of the trees is as dense as ever and as green; the flowers gleam forth in richer abundance along the margin of the river and by the stone walls and deep among the woods; the days, too, are as fervid now as they were a month ago; and yet in every breath of wind and in every beam of sunshine we hear the whispered farewell and behold the parting smile of a dear friend. There is a coolness amid all the heat, a mildness in the blazing noon. Not a breeze can stir but it thrills us with the breath of autumn. A pensive glory is seen in the far golden gleams, among the shadows of the trees. The flowers—even the brightest of them, and they are the most gorgeous of the year—have this gentle sadness wedded to their pomp, and typify the character of the delicious time each within itself. The brilliant cardinal flower has never seemed gay to me.

Still later in the season Nature's tenderness waxes stronger. It is impossible not to be fond of our mother now; for she is so fond of us! At other periods she does not make this impression on me, or only at rare intervals; but in those genial days of autumn, when she has perfected her harvests and accomplished every needful thing that was given her to do, then she overflows with a blessed superfluity of love. She has leisure to caress her children now. It is good to be alive at such times. Thank Heaven for breath—yes, for mere breath—when it is made up of a heavenly breeze like this! It comes with a real kiss upon our cheeks; it would linger fondly around us if it might; but, since it must be gone, it embraces us with its whole kindly heart and passes onward to embrace likewise the next thing that it meets. A blessing is flung abroad and scattered far and wide over the earth, to be gathered up by all who choose. I recline upon the still unwithered grass and whisper to myself, "O perfect day! O beautiful world! O beneficent God!" And it is the promise of a blessed eternity; for our Creator would never have made such lovely days and have given us the deep hearts to enjoy them, above and beyond all thought, unless we were meant to be immortal. This sunshine is the golden pledge thereof. It beams through the gates of paradise and shows us glimpses far inward.

By and by, in a little time, the outward world puts on a drear austerity. On some October morning there is a heavy hoarfrost on the grass and along the tops of the fences; and at sunrise the leaves fall from the trees of our avenue without a breath of wind, quietly descending by their own weight. All summer long they have murmured like the noise of waters; they have roared loudly while the branches were wrestling with the thunder gust; they have made music both glad and solemn; they have attuned my thoughts by their quiet sound as I paced to and fro beneath the arch of intermingling boughs. Now they can only rustle under my feet. Henceforth the gray parsonage begins to assume a larger importance, and draws to its fireside,—for the abomination of the airtight stove is reserved till wintry weather,—draws closer and closer to its fireside the vagrant impulses that had gone wandering about through the summer.

When summer was dead and buried the Old Manse became as lonely as a hermitage. Not that ever—in my time at least—it had been thronged with company; but, at no rare intervals, we welcomed some friend out of the dusty glare and tumult of the world and rejoiced to share with him the transparent obscurity that was floating over us. In one respect our precincts were like the Enchanted Ground through which the pilgrim traveled on his way to the Celestial City.[8] The guests, each and all, felt a slumberous influence upon them; they fell asleep in chairs, or took a more deliberate siesta on the sofa, or were seen stretched among the shadows of the orchard, looking up dreamily through the boughs. They could not have paid a more acceptable compliment to my abode nor to my own qualities as a host. I held it as a proof that they left their cares behind them as they passed between the stone gateposts at the entrance of our avenue, and that the so powerful opiate was the abundance of peace and quiet within and all around us. Others could give them pleasure and amusement or instruction—these could be picked up anywhere; but it was for me to give them rest—rest in a life of trouble. What better could be done for those weary and world-worn spirits?—for him whose career of perpetual action was impeded and harassed by the rarest of his powers and the richest of his acquirements?—for another who had thrown his ardent heart from earliest youth into the strife of politics, and now, perchance, began to suspect that one lifetime is too brief for the accomplishment of any lofty aim?—for her on whose feminine nature had been imposed the heavy gift of intellectual power, such as a strong man might have staggered under, and with it the necessity to act upon the world?[9]—in a word, not to multiply instances, what better could be done for anybody who came within our magic circle than to throw the spell of a tranquil spirit over him? And when it had wrought its full effect, then we dismissed him, with but misty reminiscences, as if he had been dreaming of us.

Were I to adopt a pet idea as so many people do and fondle it in my embraces to the exclusion of all others, it would be, that the great want which mankind labors under at this present period is sleep. The world should recline its vast head on the first convenient pillow and take an age-long nap. It has gone distracted through a morbid activity, and, while preternaturally wide awake, is nevertheless tormented by visions that seem real to it now, but would assume their true aspect and character were all things once set right by an interval of sound repose. This is the only method of getting rid of old delusions and avoiding new ones; of regenerating our race, so that it might in due time awake as an infant out of dewy slumber; of restoring to us the simple perception of what is right and the single-hearted desire to achieve it, both of which have long been lost in consequence of this weary activity of brain and torpor or passion of the heart that now afflict the universe. Stimulants, the only mode of treatment hitherto attempted, cannot quell the disease; they do but heighten the delirium.

Let not the above paragraph ever be quoted against the author; for, though tinctured with its modicum of truth, it is the result and expression of what he knew, while he was writing, to be but a distorted survey of the state and prospects of mankind. There were circumstances around me which made it difficult to view the world precisely as it exists; for, severe and sober as was the Old Manse, it was necessary to go but a little way beyond its threshold before meeting with stranger moral shapes of men than might have been encountered elsewhere in a circuit of a thousand miles.

These hobgoblins of flesh and blood were attracted thither by the widespreading influence of a great original thinker, who had his earthly abode at the opposite extremity of our village. His mind acted upon other minds of a certain constitution with wonderful magnetism, and drew many men upon long pilgrimages to speak with him face to face. Young visionaries—to whom just so much of insight had been imparted as to make life all a labyrinth around them—came to seek the clew that should guide them out of their self-involved bewilderment. Grayheaded theorists—whose systems, at first air, had finally imprisoned them in an iron framework—traveled painfully to his door, not to ask deliverance, but to invite the free spirit into their own thraldom. People that had lighted on a new thought, or a thought that they fancied new, came to Emerson, as the finder of a glittering gem hastens to a lapidary, to ascertain its quality and value. Uncertain, troubled, earnest wanderers through the midnight of the moral world beheld his intellectual fire as a beacon burning on a hill-top, and, climbing the difficult ascent, looked forth into the surrounding obscurity more hopefully than hitherto. The light revealed objects unseen before,—mountains, gleaming lakes, glimpses of a creation among the chaos; but also, as was unavoidable, it attracted bats and owls and the whole host of night birds, which flapped their dusky wings against the gazer's eyes, and sometimes were mistaken for fowls of angelic feather. Such delusions always hover nigh whenever a beacon fire of truth is kindled.

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[8] Cf. Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The shepherds in the Delectable Mountains warned Christian of the enchanted ground, "whose air naturally tended to make one sleepy."

[9] Hawthorne probably refers respectively to Horatio Bridge, Pierce, and Margaret Fuller. See note 1, p. 371.

For myself, there had been epochs of my life when I, too, might have asked of this prophet the master word that should solve me the riddle of the universe, but now, being happy, I felt as if there were no question to be put, and therefore admired Emerson as a poet of deep beauty and austere tenderness, but sought nothing from him as a philosopher. It was good, nevertheless, to meet him in the woodpaths, or sometimes in our avenue, with that pure, intellectual gleam diffused about his presence like the garment of a shining one; and he, so quiet, so simple, so without pretension, encountering each man alive as if expecting to receive more than he could impart. And, in truth, the heart of many an ordinary man had, perchance, inscriptions which he could not read. But it was impossible to dwell in his vicinity without inhaling more or less the mountain atmosphere of his lofty thought, which, in the brains of some people, wrought a singular giddiness,—new truth being as heady as new wine. Never was a poor little country village infested with such a variety of queer, strangely-dressed, oddly-behaved mortals, most of whom took upon themselves to be important agents of the world's destiny, yet were simply bores of a very intense water. Such, I imagine, is the invariable character of persons who crowd so closely about an original thinker as to draw in his unuttered breath and thus become imbued with a false originality. This triteness of novelty is enough to make any man of common sense blaspheme at all ideas of less than a century's standing, and pray that the world may be petrified and rendered immovable in precisely the worst moral and physical state that it ever yet arrived at, rather than be benefited by such schemes of such philosophers.

And now I begin to feel—and perhaps should have sooner felt—that we have talked enough of the Old Manse. Mine honored reader, it may be, will vilify the poor author as an egotist for babbling through so many pages about a mossgrown country parsonage, and his life within its walls and on the river and in the woods, and the influences that wrought upon him from all these sources. My conscience, however, does not reproach me with betraying anything too sacredly individual to be revealed by a human spirit to its brother or sister spirit. How narrow—how shallow and scanty too—is the stream of thought that has been flowing from my pen, compared with the broad tide of dim emotions, ideas, and associations which swell around me from that portion of my existence! How little have I told! and of that little, how almost nothing is even tinctured with any quality that makes it exclusively my own! Has the reader gone wandering, hand in hand with me, through the inner passages of my being? and have we groped together into all its chambers and examined their treasures or their rubbish? Not so. We have been standing on the greensward, but just within the cavern's mouth, where the common sunshine is free to penetrate, and where every footstep is therefore free to come. I have appealed to no sentiment or sensibilities save such as are diffused among us all. So far as I am a man of really individual attributes I veil my face; nor am I, nor have I ever been, one of those supremely hospitable people who serve up their own hearts, delicately fried, with brain sauce, as a tidbit for their beloved public.

Glancing back over what I have written, it seems but the scattered reminiscences of a single summer. In fairyland there is no measurement of time; and, in a spot so sheltered from the turmoil of life's ocean, three years hastened away with a noiseless flight, as the breezy sunshine chases the cloud shadows across the depths of a still valley. Now came hints, growing more and more distinct, that the owner of the old house was pining for his native air. Carpenters next appeared making a tremendous racket among the out-buildings, strewing the green grass with pine shavings and chips of chestnut joists and vexing the whole antiquity of the place with their discordant renovations. Soon, moreover, they divested our abode of the veil of woodbine which had crept over a large portion of its southern face. All the aged mosses were cleared unsparingly away; and there were horrible whispers about brushing up the external walls with a coat of paint—a purpose as little to my taste as might be that of rouging the venerable cheeks of one's grandmother. But the hand that renovates is always more sacrilegious than that which destroys. In fine, we gathered up our household goods, drank a farewell cup of tea in our pleasant little breakfast room,—delicately fragrant tea, an unpurchasable luxury, one of the many angel gifts that had fallen like dew upon us,—and passed forth between the tall stone gateposts as uncertain as the wandering Arabs where our tent might next be pitched. Providence took me by the hand, and—an oddity of dispensation which, I trust, there is no irreverence in smiling at—has led me, as the newspapers announce while I am writing, from the Old Manse into a custom house.[10] As a story teller, I have often contrived strange vicissitudes for my imaginary personages, but none like this.

The treasure of intellectual gold which I had hoped to find in our secluded dwelling had never come to light. No profound treatise of ethics, no philosophic history, no novel even, that could stand unsupported on its edges. All that I had to show, as a man of letters, were these few tales and essays, which had blossomed out like flowers in the calm summer of my heart and mind. Save editing (an easy task) the journal of my friend of many years, the African Cruiser, I had done nothing else. With these idle weeds and withering blossoms I have intermixed some that were produced long ago,—old, faded things, reminding me of flowers pressed between the leaves of a book,—and now offer the bouquet, such as it is, to any whom it may please. These fitful sketches, with so little of external life about them, yet claiming no profundity of purpose,—so reserved, even while they sometimes seem so frank,—often but half in earnest, and never, even when most so, expressing satisfactorily the thoughts which they profess to image,—such trifles, I truly feel, afford no solid basis for a literary reputation. Nevertheless, the public—if my limited number of readers, whom I venture to regard rather as a circle of friends, may be termed a public—will receive them the more kindly, as the last offering, the last collection, of this nature which it is my purpose ever to put forth. Unless I could do better, I have done enough in this kind. For myself the book will always retain one charm—as reminding me of the river, with its delightful solitudes, and of the avenue, the garden, and the orchard, and especially the dear Old Manse, with the little study on its western side, and the sunshine glimmering through the willow branches while I wrote.

Let the reader, if he will do me so much honor, imagine himself my guest, and that, having seen whatever may be worthy of notice within and about the Old Manse, he has finally been ushered into my study. There, after seating him in an antique elbow-chair, an heirloom of the house, I take forth a roll of manuscript and entreat his attention to the following tales—an act of personal inhospitality, however, which I never was guilty of, nor ever will be, even to my worst enemy.

1846

From THE SCARLET LETTER[1]

I

The Prison Door

A throng of bearded men, in sad-colored garments and gray steeple-crowned hats, intermixed with women, some wearing hoods, and others bareheaded, was assembled in front of a wooden edifice, the door of which was heavily timbered with oak, and studded with iron spikes.

The founders of a new colony, whatever Utopia[2] of human virtue and happiness they might originally project, have invariably recognized it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery, and another portion as the site of a prison. In accordance with this rule, it may safely be assumed that the forefathers of Boston had built the first prison-house somewhere in the vicinity of Cornhill,[3] almost as seasonably as they marked out the first burial-ground, on Isaac Johnson's[4] lot, and round about his grave, which subsequently became the nucleus of all the congregated sepulchers in the old churchyard of King's Chapel. Certain it is that, some fifteen or twenty years after the settlement of the town, the wooden jail was already marked with weather-stains and other indications of age, which gave a yet darker aspect to its beetle-browed and gloomy front. The rust on the ponderous iron-work of its oaken door looked more antique than anything else in the New World. Like all that pertains to crime, it seemed never to have known a youthful era. Before this ugly edifice, and between it and the wheel-track of the street, was a grass-plot, much overgrown with burdock, pig-weed, apple-peru, and such unsightly vegetation, which evidently found something congenial in the soil that had so early borne the black flower of civilized society, a prison. But on one side of the portal, and rooted almost at the threshold, was a wild rose-bush, covered, in this month of June, with its delicate gems, which might be imagined to offer their fragrance and fragile beauty to the prisoner as he went in, and to the condemned criminal as he came forth to his doom, in token that the deep heart of Nature could pity and be kind to him.

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[10] Hawthorne, whose literary work had as yet paid him but poorly, had obtained the position of Surveyor in the Salem Custom House.

[1] In the introduction to this novel Hawthorne relates how he found in the attic of the Salem Custom House a parchment roll containing an embroidered scarlet letter A and its history briefly written out.

[2] An ideal commonwealth described in a work published by Sir Thomas More in 1516.

[3] Probably Corn Hill, afterwards Fort Hill, now marked by Fort Hill Square. Still later, the name Cornhill was given to the part of what is now Washington Street, north of the Old South Church.

[4] He came to Massachusetts with Winthrop in 1630 and died the same year. His lot was bounded by the present School, Tremont, Court, and Washington Streets.

This rose-bush, by a strange chance, has been kept alive in history; but whether it had merely survived out of the stern old wilderness, so long after the fall of the gigantic pines and oaks that originally overshadowed it,—or whether, as there is fair authority for believing, it had sprung up under the footsteps of the sainted Ann Hutchinson[5] as she entered the prison-door, —we shall not take upon us to determine. Finding it so directly on the threshold of our narrative, which is now about to issue from that inauspicious portal, we could hardly do otherwise than pluck one of its flowers, and present it to the reader. It may serve, let us hope, to symbolize some sweet moral blossom that may be found along the track, or relieve the darkening close of a tale of human frailty and sorrow.

II

The Market Place

The grass-plot before the jail, in Prison Lane, on a certain summer morning, not less than two centuries ago, was occupied by a pretty large number of the inhabitants of Boston, all with their eyes intently fastened on the iron-clamped oaken door. Amongst any other population, or at a later period in the history of New England, the grim rigidity that petrified the bearded physiognomies of these good people would have augured some awful business in hand. It could have betokened nothing short of the anticipated execution of some noted culprit, on whom the sentence of a legal tribunal had but confirmed the verdict of public sentiment. But, in that early severity of the Puritan character, an inference of this kind could not so indubitably be drawn. It might be that a sluggish bond-servant, or an undutiful child, whom his parents had given over to the civil authority, was to be corrected at the whipping-post. It might be that an Antinomian,[6] a Quaker, or other heterodox religionist, was to be scourged out of the town, or an idle and vagrant Indian, whom the white man's firewater had made riotous about the streets, was to be driven with stripes into the shadow of the forest. It might be, too, that a witch, like old Mistress Hibbins,[7] the bitter-tempered widow of the magistrate, was to die upon the gallows. In either case, there was very much the same solemnity of demeanor on the part of the spectators, as befitted a people amongst whom religion and law were almost identical, and in whose character both were so thoroughly interfused, that the mildest and severest acts of public discipline were alike made venerable and awful. Meager, indeed, and cold, was the sympathy that a transgressor might look for, from such bystanders, at the scaffold. On the other hand, a penalty which, in our days, would infer a degree of mocking infamy and ridicule, might then be invested with almost as stern a dignity as the punishment of death itself.

It was a circumstance to be noted on the summer morning when our story begins its course, that the women, of whom there were several in the crowd, appeared to take a peculiar interest in whatever penal infliction might be expected to ensue. The age had not so much refinement, that any sense of impropriety restrained the wearers of petticoat and farthingale[8] from stepping forth into the public ways, and wedging their not unsubstantial persons, if occasion were, into the throng nearest to the scaffold at an execution. Morally, as well as materially, there was a coarser fiber in those wives and maidens of old English birth and breeding than in their fair descendants, separated from them by a series of six or seven generations; for, throughout that chain of ancestry, every successive mother had transmitted to her child a fainter bloom, a more delicate and briefer beauty, and a slighter physical frame, if not a character of less force and solidity than her own. The women who were now standing about the prison-door stood within less than half a century of the period when the man-like Elizabeth had been the not altogether unsuitable representative of the sex. They were her countrywomen; and the beef and ale of their native land, with a moral diet not a whit more refined, entered largely into their composition. The bright morning sun, therefore, shone on broad shoulders and well-developed busts, and on round and ruddy cheeks, that had ripened in the far-off island, and had hardly yet grown paler or thinner in the atmosphere of New England. There was, moreover, a boldness and rotundity of speech among these matrons, as most of them seemed to be, that would startle us at the present day, whether in respect to its purport or its volume of tone.

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[5] Mrs. Hutchinson, one of the most intellectual women of early Boston, was placed on trial and finally banished for her unorthodox views.

[6] Christians who held that the moral law of the Old Testament was not binding.

[7] "Mrs. Ann Hibbins was the widow of an immigrant of special distinction. He had been agent for the colony in England, and one of the Assistants (magistrates). He had lost his property, and the melancholy and ill-temper to which his disappointed wife gave way appear to have exposed her to misconstructions and hatred, in the sequel of which she was convicted as a witch, and after some opposition on the part of the magistrates was hanged." Palfrey, *History of New England*, IV. 98. John Norton, teacher of the First Church, said she was hanged only for having more wit than her neighbors.

"Goodwives," said a hard-featured dame of fifty, "I'll tell ye a piece of my mind. It would be greatly for the public behoof, if we women, being of mature age and church-members in good repute, should have the handling of such malefactresses as this Hester Prynne. What think ye, gossips? If the hussy stood up for judgment before us five, that are now here in a knot together, would she come off with such a sentence as the worshipful magistrates have awarded? Marry, I trow not!"

"People say," said another, "that the Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation."

"The magistrates are God-fearing gentlemen, but merciful overmuch,—that is a truth," added a third autumnal matron. "At the very least, they should have put the brand of a hot iron on Hester Prynne's forehead. Madam Hester would have winced at that, I warrant me. But she,—the naughty baggage,—little will she care what they put upon the bodice of her gown! Why, look you, she may cover it with a brooch, or such like heathenish adornment, and so walk the streets as brave as ever!"

"Ah, but," interposed, more softly a young wife, holding a child by the hand, "let her cover the mark as she will, the pang of it will be always in her heart."

"What do we talk of marks and brands, whether on the bodice of her gown or the flesh of her forehead?" cried another female, the ugliest as well as the most pitiless of these self-constituted judges. "This woman has brought shame upon us all, and ought to die. Is there not law for it? Truly there is, both in the Scripture and the statute-book. Then let the magistrates, who have made it of no effect, thank themselves if their own wives and daughters go astray!"

"Mercy on us, goodwife!" exclaimed a man in the crowd, "is there no virtue in woman, save what springs from a wholesome fear of the gallows? That is the hardest word yet! Hush, now, gossips! for the lock is turning in the prison-door, and here comes Mistress Prynne herself."

The door of the jail being flung open from within, there appeared, in the first place, like a black shadow emerging into sunshine, the grim and grisly presence of the town-beadle, with a sword by his side, and his staff of office in his hand. This personage prefigured and represented in his aspect the whole dismal severity of the Puritanic code of law, which it was his business to administer in its final and closest application to the offender. Stretching forth the official staff in his left hand, he laid his right upon the shoulder of a young woman, whom he thus drew forward, until, on the threshold of the prison-door, she repelled him, by an action marked with natural dignity and force of character, and stepped into the open air as if by her own free will. She bore in her arms a child, a baby of some three months old, who winked and turned aside its little face from the too vivid light of day; because its existence, heretofore, had brought it acquaintance only with the gray twilight of a dungeon, or other darksome apartment of the prison.

When the young woman—the mother of this child—stood fully revealed before the crowd, it seemed to be her first impulse to clasp the infant closely to her bosom; not so much by an impulse of motherly affection, as that she might thereby conceal a certain token, which was wrought or fastened into her dress. In a moment, however, wisely judging that one token of her shame would but poorly serve to hide another, she took the baby on her arm, and with a burning blush, and yet a haughty smile, and a glance that would not be abashed, looked around at her townspeople and neighbors. On the breast of her gown, in fine red cloth, surrounded with an elaborate embroidery and fantastic flourishes of gold thread, appeared the letter A. It was so artistically done, and with so much fertility and gorgeous luxuriance of fancy, that it had all the effect of a last and fitting decoration to the apparel which she wore; and which was of a splendor in accordance with the taste of the age, but greatly beyond what was allowed by the sumptuary regulations of the colony.

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[8] hoop petticoat

The young woman was tall, with a figure of perfect elegance on a large scale. She had dark and abundant hair, so glossy that it threw off the sunshine with a gleam and a face which, besides being beautiful from regularity of feature and richness of complexion, had the impressiveness belonging to a marked brow and deep black eyes. She was ladylike, too, after the manner of the feminine gentility of those days; characterized by a certain state and dignity, rather than by the delicate, evanescent, and indescribable grace which is now recognized as its indication. And never had Hester Prynne appeared more ladylike, in the antique interpretation of the term, than as she issued from the prison. Those who had before known her, and had expected to behold her dimmed and obscured by a disastrous cloud, were astonished, and even startled, to perceive how her beauty shone out, and made a halo of the misfortune and ignominy in which she was enveloped. It may be true that, to a sensitive observer, there was something exquisitely painful in it. Her attire, which indeed, she had wrought for the occasion in prison, and had modeled much after her own fancy, seemed to express the attitude of her spirit, the desperate recklessness of her mood, by its wild and picturesque peculiarity. But the point which drew all eyes, and, as it were, transfigured the wearer—so that both men and women who had been familiarly acquainted with Hester Prynne were now impressed as if they beheld her for the first time—was that SCARLET LETTER, so fantastically embroidered and illuminated upon her bosom. It had the effect of a spell, taking her out of the ordinary relations with humanity, and enclosing her in a sphere by herself.

"She hath good skill at her needle, that's certain," remarked one of her female spectators; "but did ever a woman, before this brazen hussy, contrive such a way of showing it! Why, gossips, what is it but to laugh in the faces of our godly magistrates, and make a pride out of what they, worthy gentlemen, meant for a punishment?"

"It were well," muttered the most iron-visaged of the old dames, "if we stripped Madame Hester's rich gown off her dainty shoulders; and as for the red letter which she hath stitched so curiously, I'll bestow a rag of mine own rheumatic flannel to make a fitter one!"

"Oh, peace, neighbors, peace!" whispered their youngest companion; "do not let her hear you! Not a stitch in that embroidered letter but she has felt it in her heart."

The grim beadle now made a gesture with his staff.

"Make way, good people, make way, in the King's name!" cried he. "Open a passage; and, I promise ye, Mistress Prynne shall be set where man, woman, and child may have a fair sight of her brave apparel from this time till an hour past meridian. A blessing on the righteous colony of the Massachusetts, where iniquity is dragged out into the sunshine! Come along, Madam Hester, and show your scarlet letter in the market-place!"

A lane was forthwith opened through the crowd of spectators. Preceded by the beadle, and attended by an irregular procession of stern-browed men and unkindly visaged women, Hester Prynne set forth towards the place appointed for her punishment. A crowd of eager and curious schoolboys, understanding little of the matter in hand, except that it gave them a half-holiday, ran before her progress, turning their heads continually to stare into her face and at the winking baby in her arms, and at the ignominious letter on her breast. It was no great distance, in those days, from the prison door to the market-place. Measured by the prisoner's experience, however, it might be reckoned a journey of some length; for haughty as her demeanor was, she perchance underwent an agony from every footstep of those that thronged to see her, as if her heart had been flung into the street for them all to spurn and trample upon. In our nature, however, there is a provision, alike marvelous and merciful, that the sufferer should never know the intensity of what he endures by its present torture, but chiefly by the pang that rankles after it. With almost a serene deportment, therefore, Hester Prynne passed through this portion of her ordeal, and came to a sort of scaffold, at the western extremity of the market-place. It stood nearly beneath the eaves of Boston's earliest church, and appeared to be a fixture there.

In fact, this scaffold constituted a portion of a penal machine, which now, for two or three generations past, has been merely historical and traditionary among us, but was held, in the old time, to be as effectual an agent, in the promotion of good citizenship, as ever was the guillotine among the terrorists of France. It was, in short, the platform of the pillory; and above it rose the framework of that instrument of discipline, so fashioned as to confine the human head in its tight grasp, and thus hold it up to the public gaze. The very ideal of ignominy was embodied and made manifest in this contrivance of wood and iron. There can be no outrage, methinks, against our common nature,—whatever be the delinquencies of the individual,—no outrage more flagrant than to forbid the culprit to hide his face for shame; as it was the essence of this punishment to do. In Hester Prynne's instance, however, as not unfrequently in other cases, her sentence bore that she should stand a certain time upon the platform, but without undergoing that gripe about the neck and confinement of the head, the proneness to which was the most devilish characteristic of this ugly engine. Knowing well her part, she ascended a flight of wooden steps, and was thus displayed to the surrounding multitude, at about the height of a man's shoulders above the street.

Had there been a Papist among the crowd of Puritans, he might have seen in this beautiful woman, so picturesque in her attire and mien, and with the infant at her bosom, an object to remind him of the image of Divine Maternity, which so many illustrious painters have vied with one another to represent; something which should remind him, indeed, but only by contrast, of that sacred image of sinless motherhood, whose infant was to redeem the world. Here, there was the taint of deepest sin in the most sacred quality of human life, working such effect, that the world was only the darker for this woman's beauty, and the more lost for the infant that she had borne.

The scene was not without a mixture of awe, such as must always invest the spectacle of guilt and shame in a fellow-creature, before society shall have grown corrupt enough to smile, instead of shuddering at it. The witnesses of Hester Prynne's disgrace had not yet passed beyond their simplicity. They were stern enough to look upon her death, had that been the sentence, without a murmur at its severity, but had none of the heartlessness of another social state, which would find only a theme for jest in an exhibition like the present. Even had there been a disposition to turn the matter into ridicule, it must have been repressed and overpowered by the solemn presence of men no less dignified than the Governor, and several of his counsellors, a judge, a general, and the ministers of the town, all of whom sat or stood in a balcony of the meeting-house, looking down upon the platform. When such personages could constitute a part of the spectacle, without risking the majesty, or reverence of rank and office, it was safely to be inferred that the infliction of a legal sentence would have an earnest and effectual meaning. Accordingly, the crowd was somber and grave. The unhappy culprit sustained herself as best a woman might, under the heavy weight of a thousand unrelenting eyes, all fastened upon her, and concentrated at her bosom. It was almost intolerable to be borne. Of an impulsive and passionate nature, she had fortified herself to encounter the stings and venomous stabs of public contumely, wreaking itself in every variety of insult; but there was a quality so much more terrible in the solemn mood of the popular mind, that she longed rather to behold all those rigid countenances contorted with scornful merriment, and herself the object. Had a roar of laughter burst from the multitude, — each man, each woman, each little shrill-voiced child, contributing their individual parts,—Hester Prynne might have repaid them all with a bitter and disdainful smile. But, under the leaden infliction which it was her doom to endure, she felt, at moments, as if she must needs shriek out with the full power of her lungs, and cast herself from the scaffold down upon the ground, or else go mad at once.

Yet there were intervals when the whole scene, in which she was the most conspicuous object, seemed to vanish from her eyes, or, at least, glimmered indistinctly before them, like a mass of imperfectly shaped and spectral images. Her mind, and especially her memory, was preternaturally active, and kept bringing up other scenes than this roughly hewn street of a little town, on the edge of the western wilderness: other faces than were lowering upon her from beneath the brims of those steeple-crowned hats. Reminiscences, the most trifling and immaterial, passages of infancy and school days, sports, childish quarrels, and the little domestic traits of her maiden years, came swarming back upon her, intermingled with recollections of whatever was gravest in her subsequent life; one picture precisely as vivid as another; as if all were of similar importance, or all alike a play. Possibly, it was an instinctive device of her spirit to relieve itself, by the exhibition of these phantasmagoric forms, from the cruel weight and hardness of the reality.

Be that as it might, the scaffold of the pillory was a point of view that revealed to Hester Prynne the entire track along which she had been treading, since her happy infancy. Standing on that miserable eminence, she saw her native village, in Old England, and her paternal home: a decayed house of gray stone, with a poverty-stricken aspect, but retaining a half obliterated shield of arms over the portal, in token of antique gentility. She saw her father's face, with its bald brow, and reverend white beard, that flowed over the old-fashioned Elizabethan ruff; her mother's, too, with the look of heedful and anxious love which it always wore in her remembrance, and which, even since her death, had so often laid the impediment of a gentle remonstrance in her daughter's pathway. She saw her own face, glowing with girlish beauty, and illuminating all the interior of the dusky mirror in which she had been wont to gaze at it. There she beheld another countenance, of a man well stricken in years, a pale, thin, scholar-like visage, with eyes dim and bleared by the lamplight that had served them to pore over many ponderous books. Yet those same bleared optics had a strange, penetrating power, when it was their owner's purpose to read the human soul. This figure of the study and the cloister, as Hester Prynne's womanly fancy failed not to recall, was slightly deformed, with the left shoulder a trifle higher than the right. Next rose before her, in memory's picture-gallery, the intricate and narrow thoroughfares, the tall, gray houses, the huge cathedrals, and the public edifices, ancient in date and quaint in architecture, of a Continental city; where new life had awaited her, still in connection with the misshapen scholar: a new life, but feeding itself on time-worn materials, like a tuft of green moss on a crumbling wall. Lastly, in lieu of these shifting scenes, came back the rude market-place of the Puritan settlement, with all the townspeople assembled, and leveling their stern regards at Hester Prynne,—yes, at herself,—who stood on the scaffold of the pillory, an infant on her arm, and the letter A, in scarlet, fantastically embroidered with gold thread, upon her bosom!

Could it be true? She clutched the child so fiercely to her breast that it sent forth a cry; she turned her eyes downward at the scarlet letter, and even touched it with her finger, to assure herself that the infant and the shame were real. Yes!—these were her realities—all else had vanished!

III

THE RECOGNITION

From this intense consciousness of being the object of severe and universal observation, the wearer of the scarlet letter was at length relieved, by discerning, on the outskirts of the crowd, a figure which irresistibly took possession of her thoughts. An Indian in his native garb was standing there; but the red men were not so infrequent visitors of the English settlements that one of them would have attracted any notice from Hester Prynne at such a time; much less would he have excluded all other objects and ideas from her mind. By the Indian's side, and evidently sustaining a companionship with him, stood a white man, clad in a strange disarray of civilized and savage costume.

He was small in stature, with a furrowed visage, which as yet could hardly be termed aged. There was a remarkable intelligence in his features, as of a person who had so cultivated his mental part that it could not fail to mold the physical to itself, and become manifest by unmistakable tokens. Although, by a seemingly careless arrangement of his heterogeneous garb, he had endeavoured to conceal or abate the peculiarity, it was sufficiently evident to Hester Prynne that one of this man's shoulders rose higher than the other. Again, at the first instant of perceiving that thin visage, and the slight deformity of the figure, she pressed her infant to her bosom with so convulsive a force that the poor babe uttered another cry of pain. But the mother did not seem to hear it.

At his arrival in the market-place, and some time before she saw him, the stranger had bent his eyes on Hester Prynne. It was carelessly at first, like a man chiefly accustomed to look inward, and to whom external matters are of little value and import, unless they bear relation to something within his mind. Very soon, however, his look became keen and penetrative. A writhing horror twisted itself across his features, like a snake gliding swiftly over them, and making one little pause, with all its wreathed intervolutions in open sight. His face darkened with some powerful emotion, which, nevertheless, he so instantaneously controlled by an effort of his will, that, save at a single moment, its expression might have passed for calmness. After a brief space, the convulsion grew almost imperceptible, and finally subsided into the depths of his nature. When he found the eyes of Hester Prynne fastened on his own, and saw that she appeared to recognize him, he slowly and calmly raised his finger, made a gesture with it in the air, and laid it on his lips.

Then touching the shoulder of a townsman who stood next to him, he addressed him in a formal and courteous manner.

"I pray you, good Sir," said he, "who is this woman?—and wherefore is she here set up to public shame?"

"You must needs be a stranger in this region, friend," answered the townsman, looking curiously at the questioner and his savage companion, "else you would surely have heard of Mistress Hester Prynne and her evil doings. She hath raised a great scandal, I promise you, in godly Master Dimmesdale's church."

"You say truly," replied the other. "I am a stranger, and have been a wanderer, sorely against my will. I have met with grievous mishaps by sea and land, and have been long held in bonds among the heathen-folk to the southward; and am now brought hither by this Indian to be redeemed out of my captivity. Will it please you, therefore, to tell me of Hester's Prynne's—have I her name rightly?—of this woman's offences, and what has brought her to yonder scaffold?"

"Truly, friend; and methinks it must gladden your heart, after your troubles and sojourn in the wilderness," said the townsman, "to find yourself at length in a land where iniquity is searched out and punished in the sight of rulers and people, as here in our godly New England. Yonder woman, sir, you must know, was the wife of a certain learned man, English by birth, but who had long dwelt in Amsterdam, whence some good time agone he was minded to cross over and cast in his lot with us of the Massachusetts. To this purpose he sent his wife before him, remaining himself to look after some necessary affairs. Marry, good sir, in some two years, or less, that the woman has been a dweller here in Boston, no tidings have come of this learned gentleman, Master Prynne; and his young wife, look you, being left to her own misguidance"—

"Ah!—aha!—I conceive you," said the stranger with a bitter smile. "So learned a man as you speak of should have learned this too in his books. And who, by your favor, sir, may be the father of yonder babe—it is some three or four months old, I should judge—which Mistress Prynne is holding in her arms?"

"Of a truth, friend, that matter remaineth a riddle; and the Daniel who shall expound it is yet a-wanting," answered the townsman. "Madame Hester absolutely refuseth to speak, and the magistrates have laid their heads together in vain. Peradventure the guilty one stands looking on at this sad spectacle, unknown of man, and forgetting that God sees him."

"The learned man," observed the stranger with another smile, "should come himself to look into the mystery."

"It behooves him well if he be still in life," responded the townsman. "Now, good sir, our Massachusetts magistracy, bethinking themselves that this woman is youthful and fair, and doubtless was strongly tempted to her fall, and that, moreover, as is most likely, her husband may be at the bottom of the sea, they have not been bold to put in force the extremity of our righteous law against her. The penalty thereof is death. But in their great mercy and tenderness of heart they have doomed Mistress Prynne to stand only a space of three hours on the platform of the pillory, and then and thereafter, for the remainder of her natural life, to wear a mark of shame upon her bosom."

"A wise sentence!" remarked the stranger, gravely bowing his head. "Thus she will be a living sermon against sin, until the ignominious letter be engraved upon her tombstone. It irks me, nevertheless, that the partner of her iniquity should not, at least, stand on the scaffold by her side. But he will be known!—he will be known!—he will be known!"

He bowed courteously to the communicative townsman, and whispering a few words to his Indian attendant, they both made their way through the crowd.

While this passed, Hester Prynne had been standing on her pedestal, still with a fixed gaze towards the stranger—so fixed a gaze that, at moments of intense absorption, all other objects in the visible world seemed to vanish, leaving only him and her. Such an interview, perhaps, would have been more terrible than even to meet him as she now did, with the hot mid-day sun burning down upon her face, and lighting up its shame; with the scarlet token of infamy on her breast; with the sin-born infant in her arms; with a whole people, drawn forth as to a festival, staring at the features that should have been seen only in the quiet gleam of the fireside, in the happy shadow of a home, or beneath a matronly veil at church. Dreadful as it was, she was conscious of a shelter in the presence of these thousand witnesses. It was better to stand thus, with so many betwixt him and her, than to greet him face to face, they two alone. She fled for refuge, as it were, to the public exposure, and dreaded the moment when its protection should be withdrawn from her. Involved in these thoughts, she scarcely heard a voice behind her until it had repeated her name more than once, in a loud and solemn tone, audible to the whole multitude.

"Hearken unto me, Hester Prynne!" said the voice.

It has already been noticed that directly over the platform on which Hester Prynne stood was a kind of balcony, or open gallery, appended to the meeting-house. It was the place whence proclamations were wont to be made, amidst an assemblage of the magistracy, with all the ceremonial that attended such public observances in those days. Here, to witness the scene which we are describing, sat Governor Bellingham[9] himself with four sergeants about his chair, bearing halberds, as a guard of honor. He wore a dark feather in his hat, a border of embroidery on his cloak, and a black velvet tunic beneath; a gentleman advanced in years, with a hard experience written in his wrinkles. He was not ill fitted to be the head and representative of a community which owed its origin and progress, and its present state of development, not to the impulses of youth, but to the stern and tempered energies of manhood and the somber sagacity of age; accomplishing so much, precisely because it imagined and hoped so little. The other eminent characters by whom the chief ruler was surrounded were distinguished by a dignity of mien, belonging to a period when the forms of authority were felt to possess the sacredness of divine institutions. They were, doubtless, good men, just and sage. But, out of the whole human family, it would not have been easy to select the same number of wise and virtuous persons, who should be less capable of sitting in judgment on an erring woman's heart, and disentangling its mesh of good and evil, than the sages of rigid aspect towards whom Hester Prynne now turned her face. She seemed conscious, indeed, that whatever sympathy she might expect lay in the larger and warmer heart of the multitude; for, as she lifted her eyes towards the balcony, the unhappy woman grew pale, and trembled.

The voice which had called her attention was that of the reverend and famous John Wilson,[10] the eldest clergyman of Boston, a great scholar, like most of his contemporaries in the profession, and withal a man of kind and genial spirit. This last attribute, however, had been less carefully developed than his intellectual gifts, and was, in truth, rather a matter of shame than self-congratulation with him. There he stood, with a border of grizzled locks beneath his skull-cap; while his gray eyes, accustomed to the shaded light of his study, were winking, like those of Hester's infant, in the unadulterated sunshine. He looked like the darkly engraved portraits which we see prefixed to old volumes of sermons, and had no more right than one of those portraits would have to step forth, as he now did, and meddle with a question of human guilt, passion, and anguish.

"Hester Prynne," said the clergyman, "I have striven with my young brother here, under whose preaching of the Word you have been privileged to sit"—here Mr. Wilson laid his hand on the shoulder of a pale young man beside him—"I have sought, I say, to persuade this godly youth, that he should deal with you, here in the face of Heaven, and before these wise and upright rulers, and in hearing of all the people, as touching the vileness and blackness of your sin. Knowing your natural temper better than I, he could the better judge what arguments to use, whether of tenderness or terror, such as might prevail over your hardness and obstinacy; insomuch that you should no longer hide the name of him who tempted you to this grievous fall. But he opposes to me (with a young man's over-softness, albeit wise beyond his years), that it were wronging the very nature of woman to force her to lay open her heart's secrets in such broad daylight, and in presence of so great a multitude. Truly, as I sought to convince him, the shame lay in the commission of the sin, and not in the showing of it forth. What say you to it, once again, Brother Dimmesdale? Must it be thou, or I, that shall deal with this poor sinner's soul?"

There was a murmur among the dignified and reverend occupants of the balcony; and

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[9] Governor of Massachusetts in 1641, 1654, and 1665-72.

[10] John Wilson, pastor of the First Church, Boston, from 1632 till 1667.

Governor Bellingham gave expression to its purport, speaking in an authoritative voice, although tempered with respect towards the youthful clergyman whom he addressed.

"Good Master Dimmesdale," said he, "the responsibility of this woman's soul lies greatly with you. It behooves you, therefore, to exhort her to repentance and to confession, as a proof and consequence thereof."

The directness of this appeal drew the eyes of the whole crowd upon the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale—a young clergyman, who had come from one of the great English universities, bringing all the learning of the age into our wild forest land. His eloquence and religious fervor had already given the earnest of high eminence in his profession. He was a person of very striking aspect, with a white, lofty, and impending brow, large, brown, melancholy eyes, and a mouth which, unless when he forcibly compressed it, was apt to be tremulous, expressing both nervous sensibility and a vast power of self-restraint. Notwithstanding his high native gifts and scholar-like attainments, there was an air about this young minister—an apprehensive, a startled, a half-frightened look,—as of a being who felt himself quite astray, and at a loss in the pathway of human existence, and could only be at ease in some seclusion of his own. Therefore, so far as his duties would permit, he trod in the shadowy by-paths, and thus kept himself simple and childlike; coming forth, when occasion was, with a freshness, and fragrance, and dewy purity of thought, which, as many people said, affected them like the speech of an angel.

Such was the young man whom the Reverend Mr. Wilson and the Governor had introduced so openly to the public notice, bidding him speak, in the hearing of all men, to that mystery of a woman's soul, so sacred even in its pollution. The trying nature of his position drove the blood from his cheek, and made his lips tremulous.

"Speak to the woman, my brother," said Mr. Wilson. "It is of moment to her soul, and, therefore, as the worshipful Governor says, momentous to thine own, in whose charge hers is. Exhort her to confess the truth!"

The Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale bent his head, in silent prayer, as it seemed, and then came forward.

"Hester Prynne," said he, leaning over the balcony and looking down steadfastly into her eyes, "thou hearest what this good man says, and seest the accountability under which I labor. If thou feelest it to be for thy soul's peace, and that thy earthly punishment will thereby be made more effectual to salvation, I charge thee to speak out the name of thy fellow-sinner and fellow-sufferer! Be not silent from any mistaken pity and tenderness for him; for, believe me, Hester, though he were to step down from a high place, and stand there beside thee, on thy pedestal of shame, yet better were it so than to hide a guilty heart through life. What can thy silence do for him, except it tempt him—yea, compel him, as it were—to add hypocrisy to sin? Heaven hath granted thee an open ignominy, that thereby thou mayest work out an open triumph over the evil within thee, and the sorrow without. Take heed how thou deniest to him—who, perchance, hath not the courage to grasp it for himself—the bitter, but wholesome, cup that is now presented to thy lips!"

The young pastor's voice was tremulously sweet, rich, deep, and broken. The feeling that it so evidently manifested, rather than the direct purport of the words, caused it to vibrate within all hearts, and brought the listeners into one accord of sympathy. Even the poor baby at Hester's bosom was affected by the same influence, for it directed its hitherto vacant gaze towards Mr. Dimmesdale, and held up its little arms with a half-pleased, half-plaintive murmur. So powerful seemed the minister's appeal that the people could not believe but that Hester Prynne would speak out the guilty name; or else that the guilty one himself, in whatever high or lowly place he stood, would be drawn forth by an inward and inevitable necessity, and compelled to ascend the scaffold.

Hester shook her head.

"Woman, transgress not beyond the limits of Heaven's mercy!" cried the Reverend Mr. Wilson, more harshly than before. "That little babe hath been gifted with a voice, to second and confirm the counsel which thou hast heard. Speak out the name! That, and thy repentance, may avail to take the scarlet letter off thy breast."

"Never!" replied Hester Prynne, looking, not at Mr. Wilson, but into the deep and troubled eyes of the younger clergyman. "It is too deeply branded. Ye cannot take it off. And would that I might endure his agony as well as mine!"

"Speak, woman!" said another voice, coldly and sternly, proceeding from the crowd about the scaffold. "Speak; and give your child a father!"

"I will not speak!" answered Hester, turning pale as death, but responding to this voice, which she too surely recognized. "And my child must seek a heavenly Father; she shall never know an earthly one!"

"She will not speak!" murmured Mr. Dimmesdale, who, leaning over the balcony, with his hand upon his heart, had awaited the result of his appeal. He now drew back with a long respiration. "Wondrous strength and generosity of a woman's heart! She will not speak!"

Discerning the impracticable state of the poor culprit's mind, the elder clergyman, who had carefully prepared himself for the occasion, addressed to the multitude a discourse on sin, in all its branches, but with continual reference to the ignominious letter. So forcibly did he dwell upon this symbol, for the hour or more during which his periods were rolling over the people's heads, that it assumed new terrors in their imagination, and seemed to derive its scarlet hue from the flames of the infernal pit. Hester Prynne, meanwhile, kept her place upon the pedestal of shame, with glazed eyes, and an air of weary indifference. She had borne that morning all that nature could endure; and as her temperament was not of the order that escapes from too intense suffering by a swoon, her spirit could only shelter itself beneath a stony crust of insensibility, while the faculties of animal life remained entire. In this state, the voice of the preacher thundered remorselessly, but unavailingly, upon her ears. The infant, during the latter portion of her ordeal, pierced the air with its wailings and screams; she strove to hush it, mechanically, but seemed scarcely to sympathize with its trouble. With the same hard demeanor, she was led back to prison, and vanished from the public gaze within its iron-clamped portal. It was whispered by those who peered after her, that the scarlet letter threw a lurid gleam along the dark passageway of the interior.

1849-1850 1850

From THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES

XVIII

Governor Pyncheon

Judge Pyncheon,[1] while his two relatives have fled away with such ill-considered haste, still sits in the old parlor, keeping house, as the familiar phrase is, in the absence of its ordinary occupants. To him, and to the venerable House of the Seven Gables, does our story now betake itself, like an owl, bewildered in the daylight, and hastening back to his hollow tree.

The Judge has not shifted his position for a long while now. He has not stirred hand or foot, nor withdrawn his eyes so much as a hair's breadth from their fixed gaze towards the corner of the room, since the footsteps of Hepzibah and Clifford creaked along the passage, and the outer door was closed cautiously behind their exit. He holds his watch in his left hand, but clutched in such a manner that you cannot see the dial-plate. How profound a fit of meditation! Or, supposing him asleep, how infantile a quietude of conscience, and what wholesome order in the gastric region, are betokened by slumber so entirely undisturbed with starts, cramp, twitches, muttered dream-talk, trumpet-blasts through the nasal organ, or any the slightest irregularity of breath! You must hold your own breath, to satisfy yourself whether he breathes at all. It is quite inaudible. You hear the ticking of his watch; his breath you do not hear. A most refreshing slumber, doubtless! And yet, the Judge cannot be asleep. His eyes are open! A veteran politician, such as he, would never fall asleep with wide-open eyes, lest some enemy or mischief-maker, taking him thus at unawares, should peep through these windows into his consciousness, and make strange discoveries among the reminiscences, projects, hopes, apprehensions, weaknesses, and strong points, which he has heretofore shared with nobody. A cautious man is proverbially said to sleep with one eye open. That may be wisdom. But not with both; for this were heedlessness! No, no! Judge Pyncheon cannot be asleep.

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[1] According to the story, Col. Pyncheon in about 1660 had laid apparently unlawful claim to a piece of land belonging to Matthew Maule, a man of humble station. The dispute had ended when Matthew Maule—some said at the instigation of Col. Pyncheon—had been hanged as a wizard. His last words on the scaffold, as he pointed his finger at the Colonel had been, "God will give him blood to drink." The prophecy was remembered some years later, on the occasion of the Colonel's great house-warming in the new seven-gabled mansion erected on the site of Maule's hut and garden-spot, when, after the guests had all assembled, Col. Pyncheon was found dead at his desk in his library, with blood on his ruff and beard. Maule's curse was again remembered one hundred years later when another Pyncheon died under similar circumstances. In the mid-nineteenth century the violent death of one member of the Pyncheon family at the hands of another had aroused the memories of the superstitious. The owner of the estate was then a rich Judge Pyncheon who allowed his very poor cousin Hepzibah Pyncheon to inhabit the house of the seven gables. Her rather simple-minded brother Clifford, who had been accused of the murder of the former heir, his bachelor uncle, had after about thirty years of imprisonment returned to Hepzibah, his mind almost a blank, and more like a gentle child than a man. Happy, cheerful little Phoebe Pyncheon, the daughter of another cousin, had also come to live with Hepzibah.

In the two preceding chapters Judge Pyncheon has announced to Hepzibah that he must see Clifford to get from him the secret of where the documents or deeds conveying vast estates of the Pyncheons lie hid. When Hepzibah insists that Clifford does not know, Judge Pyncheon states the alternative:—Clifford must either tell or go to an insane asylum. Hepzibah, after resisting the demand as bravely as she can, has at last gone to call her brother. She does not find him until returning she meets him at the door of the parlor. Frightened by what they both see within, they hastily leave the house.

It is odd, however, that a gentleman so burdened with engagements—and noted, too, for punctuality, should linger thus in an old lonely mansion, which he has never seemed very fond of visiting. The oaken chair, to be sure, may tempt him with its roominess. It is, indeed, a spacious, and, allowing for the rude age that fashioned it, a moderately easy seat, with capacity enough, at all events, and offering no restraint to the Judge's breadth of beam. A bigger man might find ample accommodation in it. His ancestor, now pictured upon the wall, with all his English beef about him, used hardly to present a front extending from elbow to elbow of this chair, or a base that would cover its whole cushion. But there are better chairs than this,—mahogany, black walnut, rosewood, spring-seated and damask-cushioned, with varied slopes, and innumerable artifices to make them easy, and obviate the irksomeness of too tame an ease,—a score of such might be at Judge Pyncheon's service. Yes! in a score of drawing-rooms he would be more than welcome. Mamma would advance to meet him, with outstretched hand; the virgin daughter, elderly as he has now got to be,—an old widower, as he smilingly describes himself,—would shake up the cushion for the Judge, and do her pretty little utmost to make him comfortable. For the Judge is a prosperous man. He cherishes his schemes, moreover, like other people, and reasonably brighter than most others; or did so, at least, as he lay abed, this morning, in an agreeable half-drowse, planning the business of the day, and speculating on the probabilities of the next fifteen years. With his firm health, and the little inroad that age has made upon him, fifteen years or twenty—yes, or perhaps five-and-twenty!—are no more than he may fairly call his own. Five-and-twenty years for the enjoyment of his real estate in town and country, his railroad, bank, and insurance shares, his United States stock,—his wealth, in short, however invested, now in possession, or soon to be acquired; together with the public honors that have fallen upon him, and the weightier ones that are yet to fall! It is good! It is excellent! It is enough!

Still lingering in the old chair! If the Judge has a little time to throw away, why does not he visit the insurance office, as is his frequent custom, and sit awhile in one of their leathern-cushioned arm-chairs, listening to the gossip of the day, and dropping some deeply-designed chance-word, which will be certain to become the gossip of tomorrow! And have not the bank directors a meeting, at which it was the Judge's purpose to be present, and his office to preside? Indeed they have; and the hour is noted on a card, which is, or ought to be, in Judge Pyncheon's right vest-pocket. Let him go thither, and loll at ease upon his money-bags! He has lounged long enough in the old chair!

This was to have been such a busy day! In the first place, the interview with Clifford. Half an hour, by the Judge's reckoning, was to suffice for that; it would probably be less, but,—taking into consideration that Hepzibah was first to be dealt with, and that these women are apt to make many words where a few would do much better—it might be safest to allow half an hour. Half an hour? Why, Judge, it is already two hours, by your own undeviatingly accurate chronometer! Glance your eye down at it, and see! Ah! he will not give himself the trouble either to bend his head, or elevate his hand, so as to bring the faithful time-keeper within his range of vision! Time, all at once, appears to have become a matter of no moment with the Judge!

And has he forgotten all the other items of his memoranda? Clifford's affair arranged, he was to meet a State Street[2] broker, who has undertaken to procure a heavy percentage, and the best of paper, for a few loose thousands which the Judge happens to have by him, uninvested. The wrinkled note-shaver[3] will have taken his railroad trip in vain. Half an hour later, in the street next to this, there was to be an auction of real estate, including a portion of the old Pyncheon property, originally belonging to Maule's garden-ground. It has been alienated from the Pyncheons these fourscore years; but the Judge had kept it in his eye, and had set his heart on reannexing it to the small demesne still left around the Seven

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[2] A business street in Boston.

[3] One who buys promissory notes at a higher rate of discount than is current.

Gables; and now, during this odd fit of oblivion, the fatal hammer must have fallen, and transferred our ancient patrimony to some alien possessor! Possibly, indeed, the sale may have been postponed till fairer weather. If so, will the Judge make it convenient to be present, and favor the auctioneer with his bid, on the proximate occasion?

The next affair was to buy a horse for his own driving. The one heretofore his favorite stumbled, this very morning, on the road to town, and must be at once discarded. Judge Pyncheon's neck is too precious to be risked on such a contingency as a stumbling steed. Should all the above business be seasonably got through with, he might attend the meeting of a charitable society; the very name of which, however, in the multiplicity of his benevolence, is quite forgotten; so that this engagement may pass unfulfilled, and no great harm done. And if he have time, amid the press of more urgent matters, he must take measures for the renewal of Mrs. Pyncheon's tombstone, which, the sexton tells him, has fallen on its marble face, and is cracked quite in twain. She was a praiseworthy woman enough, thinks the Judge, in spite of her nervousness, and the tears that she was so oozy with, and her foolish behavior about the coffee; and as she took her departure so seasonably, he will not grudge the second tombstone. It is better, at least, than if she had never needed any! The next item on his list was to give orders for some fruit-trees, of a rare variety, to be deliverable at his country-seat in the ensuing autumn. Yes, buy them, by all means; and may the peaches be luscious in your mouth, Judge Pyncheon! After this comes something more important. A committee of his political party has besought him for a hundred or two of dollars, in addition to his previous disbursements, towards carrying on the fall campaign. The Judge is a patriot; the fate of the country is staked on the November election; and besides, as will be shadowed forth in another paragraph, he has no trifling stake of his own in the same great game. He will do what the committee asks; nay, he will be liberal beyond their expectations; they shall have a check for five hundred dollars, and more anon, if it be needed. What next? A decayed widow, whose husband was Judge Pyncheon's early friend, has laid her case of destitution before him, in a very moving letter. She and her fair daughter have scarcely bread to eat. He partly intends to call on her, today,—perhaps so—perhaps not,—accordingly as he may happen to have leisure, and a small bank note.

Another business, which, however, he puts no great weight on—(it is well, you know, to be heedful, but not over anxious, as respects one's personal health)—another business, then, was to consult his family physician. About what, for Heaven's sake? Why, it is rather difficult to describe the symptoms. A mere dimness of sight and dizziness of brain, was it?—or a disagreeable choking, or stifling, or gurgling, or bubbling, in the region of the thorax, as the anatomists say?—or was it a pretty severe throbbing and kicking of the heart, rather creditable to him than otherwise, as showing that the organ had not been left out of the Judge's physical contrivance? No matter what it was. The doctor, probably, would smile at the statement of such trifles to his professional ear; the Judge would smile, in his turn; and meeting one another's eyes, they would enjoy a hearty laugh together! But a fig for medical advice! The Judge will never need it!

Pray, pray, Judge Pyncheon, look at your watch, now! What—not a glance! It is within ten minutes of the dinner-hour! It surely cannot have slipped your memory that the dinner of today is to be the most important, in its consequences, of all the dinners you ever ate. Yes, precisely the most important; although, in the course of your somewhat eminent career, you have been placed high towards the head of the table, at splendid banquets, and have poured out your festive eloquence to ears yet echoing with Webster's mighty organ-tones. No public dinner this, however. It is merely a gathering of some dozen or so of friends from several districts of the state; men of distinguished character and influence, assembling, almost casually, at the house of a common friend, likewise distinguished, who will make them welcome to a little better than his ordinary fare. Nothing in the way of French cookery, but an excellent dinner nevertheless. Real turtle, we understand, and salmon, tautog, canvas-backs, pig, English mutton, good roast beef, or dainties of that serious kind, fit for substantial country gentlemen, as these honorable persons mostly are. The delicacies of the season, in short, and flavored by a brand of old Madeira which has been the pride of many seasons. It is the Juno brand; a glorious wine, fragrant, and full of gentle might; a bottled-up happiness, put by for use; a golden liquid, worth more than liquid gold; so rare and admirable, that veteran wine-bibbers count it among their epochs to have tasted it! It drives away the heart-ache, and substitutes no head-ache! Could the Judge but quaff a glass, it might enable him to shake off the unaccountable lethargy which (for the ten intervening minutes, and five to boot, are already past) has made him such a laggard at this momentous dinner. It would all but revive a dead man! Would you like to sip it now, Judge Pyncheon?

Alas, this dinner! Have you really forgotten its true object? Then let us whisper it, that you may start at once out of the oaken chair, which really seems to be enchanted, like the one in *Comus,* or that in which Moll Pitcher imprisoned your own grandfather.[4] But ambition is a talisman more powerful than witchcraft. Start up, then, and hurrying through the streets, burst in upon the company, that they may begin before the fish is spoiled! They wait for you; and it is little for your interest that they should wait. These gentlemen—need you be told it?—have assembled, not without purpose, from every quarter of the state. They are practiced politicians, every man of them, and skilled to adjust those preliminary measures which steal from the people, without its knowledge, the power of choosing its own rulers. The popular voice, at the next gubernatorial election, though loud as thunder, will be really but an echo of what these gentlemen shall speak, under their breath, at your friend's festive board. They meet to decide upon their candidate. This little knot of subtle schemers will control the convention, and, through it, dictate to the party. And what worthier candidate—more wise and learned, more noted for philanthropic liberality, truer to safe principles, tried oftener by public trusts, more spotless in private character, with a larger stake in the common welfare, and deeper grounded, by hereditary descent, in the faith and practice of the Puritans,—what man can be presented for the suffrage of the people, so eminently combining all these claims to the chief-rulership as Judge Pyncheon here before us?

Make haste, then! Do your part! The meed for which you have toiled, and fought, and climbed, and crept, is ready for your grasp! Be present at this dinner!—drink a glass or two of that noble wine!—make your pledges in as low a whisper as you will!—and you rise up from table virtually governor of the glorious old state! Governor Pyncheon, of Massachusetts!

And is there no potent and exhilarating cordial in a certainty like this? It has been the grand purpose of half your lifetime to obtain it. Now, when there needs little more than to signify your acceptance, why do you sit so lumpishly in your great-great-grandfather's oaken chair, as if preferring it to the gubernatorial one? We have all heard of King Log;[5] but, in these jostling times, one of that royal kindred will hardly win the race for an elective chief-magistracy.

Well! it is absolutely too late for dinner! Turtle, salmon, tautog, woodcock, boiled turkey, South-Down mutton, pig, roast beef, have vanished, or exist only in fragments, with lukewarm potatoes, and gravies crusted over with cold fat. The Judge, had he done nothing else, would have achieved wonders with his knife and fork. It was he, you know, of whom it used to be said, in reference to his ogre-like appetite, that his Creator made him a great animal, but that the dinner hour made him a great beast. Persons of his large sensual endowments must claim indulgence, at their feeding-time. But, for once, the Judge is entirely too late for dinner! Too late, we fear, even to join the party at their wine! The guests are warm and merry; they have given up the Judge; and, concluding that the Free-Soilers[6] have him, they will fix upon another candidate. Were our friend now to stalk in among them, with that wide-open stare, at once wild and stolid, his ungenial presence would be apt to change their cheer. Neither would it be seemly in Judge Pyncheon, generally so scrupulous in his attire, to show himself at a dinner-table with that crimson stain upon his shirt-bosom. By the bye, how came it there? It is an ugly sight, at any rate; and the wisest way for the judge is to button his coat closely over his breast, and, taking his horse and chaise from the livery-stable, to make all speed to his own house. There, after a glass of brandy and water, and a mutton chop, a beef steak, a broiled fowl, or some such hasty little dinner and supper all in one, he had better spend the evening by the fireside. He must toast his slippers a long while, in order to get rid of the chilliness which the air of this vile old house has sent curdling through his veins.

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[4] Comus, the evil spirit in Milton's masque, by his enchantment, prevents the lady from arising from the chair in which he has seated her. Moll Pitcher was a fortune-teller of Lynn, Massachusetts, who died in 1813. C. W. Upham, in his *Lectures on Witchcraft,* says: ". . . She derived her mysterious gifts by inheritance, her grandfather having practiced them before in Marblehead. Sailors, merchants, and adventurers of every kind visited her residence, and placed confidence in her predictions." According to Whittier, she foretold by consulting tea-leaves. See Whittier's suppressed poem, *Moll Pitcher;* also Alonzo Lewis's *History of Lynn.* Hawthorne apparently invents the story of her rivalling Comus.

[5] See note 11, p. 201.

[6] The Free-Soil party, organized in 1848, believed in stipulating, on the admission of a state or territory, that slavery should not exist within its boundaries.

Up, therefore, Judge Pyncheon, up! You have lost a day. But tomorrow will be here anon. Will you rise, betimes, and make the most of it? Tomorrow! Tomorrow! Tomorrow! We, that are alive, may rise betimes tomorrow. As for him that has died today, his morrow will be the resurrection morn.

Meanwhile the twilight is glooming upward out of the corners of the room. The shadows of the tall furniture grow deeper, and at first become more definite; then, spreading wider, they lose their distinctness of outline in the dark gray tide of oblivion, as it were, that creeps slowly over the various objects, and the one human figure sitting in the midst of them. The gloom has not entered from without; it has brooded here all day, and now, taking its own inevitable time, will possess itself of everything. The Judge's face, indeed, rigid, and singularly white, refuses to melt into this universal solvent. Fainter and fainter grows the light. It is as if another double handful of darkness had been scattered through the air. Now it is no longer gray, but sable. There is still a faint appearance at the window; neither a glow, nor a gleam, nor a glimmer,—any phase of light would express something far brighter than this doubtful perception, or sense, rather, that there is a window there. Has it yet vanished? No!—yes!—not quite! And there is still the swarthy whiteness,—we shall venture to marry these ill-agreeing words,—the swarthy whiteness of Judge Pyncheon's face. The features are all gone: there is only the paleness of them left. And how looks it now? There is no window! There is no face! An infinite, inscrutable blackness has annihilated sight! Where is our universe? All crumbled away from us; and we, adrift in chaos, may hearken to the gusts of homeless wind, that go sighing and murmuring about, in quest of what was once a world!

Is there no other sound? One other, and a fearful one. It is the ticking of the Judge's watch, which, ever since Hepzibah left the room in search of Clifford, he has been holding in his hand. Be the cause what it may, this little, quiet, never-ceasing throb of Time's pulse, repeating its small strokes with such busy regularity, in Judge Pyncheon's motionless hand, has an effect of terror, which we do not find in any other accompaniment of the scene.

But, listen! That puff of the breeze was louder; it had a tone unlike the dreary and sullen one which has bemoaned itself, and afflicted all mankind with miserable sympathy, for five days past. The wind has veered about! It now comes boisterously from the northwest, and, taking hold of the aged frame-work of the Seven Gables, gives it a shake, like a wrestler that would try strength with his antagonist. Another and another sturdy tussle with the blast! The old house creaks again, and makes a vociferous but somewhat unintelligible bellowing in its sooty throat (the big flue, we mean, of its wide chimney) partly in complaint at the rude wind, but rather, as befits their century and a half of hostile intimacy, in tough defiance. A rumbling kind of a bluster roars behind the fire-board.[7] A door has slammed above-stairs. A window, perhaps, has been left open, or else is driven in by an unruly gust. It is not to be conceived, beforehand, what wonderful wind-instruments are these old timber mansions, and how haunted with the strangest noises, which immediately begin to sing, and sigh, and sob, and shriek,—and to smite with sledge-hammers, airy, but ponderous, in some distant chamber,—and to tread along the entries as with stately footsteps, and rustle up and down the staircase, as with silks miraculously stiff,—whenever the gale catches the house with a window open, and gets fairly into it. Would that we were not an attendant spirit here! It is too awful! This clamor of the wind through the lonely house; the Judge's quietude, as he sits invisible; and that pertinacious ticking of his watch!

As regards Judge Pyncheon's invisibility, however, that matter will soon be remedied. The northwest wind has swept the sky clear. The window is distinctly seen. Through its panes, moreover, we dimly catch the sweep of the dark, clustering foliage, outside, fluttering with a constant irregularity of movement, and letting in a peep of starlight, now here, now there. Oftener than any other object, these glimpses illuminate the Judge's face. But here comes more effectual light. Observe that silvery dance upon the upper branches of the pear tree, and now a little lower, and now on the whole mass of boughs, while, through their shifting intricacies, the moonbeams fall aslant into the room. They play over the Judge's figure, and show that he has not stirred throughout the hours of darkness. They follow the shadows, in changeful sport, across his unchanging features. They gleam upon his watch. His grasp conceals the dial-plate; but we know that the faithful hands have met; for one of the city clocks tells midnight.

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[7] The wooden screen for the fireplace formerly used when there was no fire.

A man of sturdy understanding, like Judge Pyncheon, cares no more for twelve o'clock at night than for the corresponding hour of noon. However just the parallel drawn, in some of the preceding pages, between his Puritan ancestor and himself, it fails in this point. The Pyncheon of two centuries ago, in common with most of his contemporaries, professed his full belief in spiritual ministrations, although reckoning them chiefly of a malignant character. The Pyncheon of tonight, who sits in yonder arm-chair, believes in no such nonsense. Such, at least, was his creed, some few hours since. His hair will not bristle, therefore, at the stories which—in times when chimney-corners had benches in them, where old people sat poking into the ashes of the past, and raking out traditions like live coals—used to be told about this very room of his ancestral house. In fact, these tales are too absurd to bristle even childhood's hair. What sense, meaning, or moral, for example, such as even ghost-stories should be susceptible of, can be traced in the ridiculous legend, that, at midnight, all the dead Pyncheons are bound to assemble in this parlor? And, pray, for what? Why, to see whether the portrait of their ancestor still keeps its place upon the wall, in compliance with his testamentary directions![8] Is it worth while to come out of their graves for that?

We are tempted to make a little sport with the idea. Ghost-stories are hardly to be treated seriously, any longer. The family-party of the defunct Pyncheons, we presume, goes off in this wise.

First comes the ancestor himself, in his black cloak, steeple-hat, and trunk-breeches, girt about the waist with a leathern belt, in which hangs his steel-hilted sword; he has a long staff in his hand, such as gentlemen in advanced life used to carry, as much for the dignity of the thing as for the support to be derived from it. He looks up at the portrait; a thing of no substance, gazing at its own painted image! All is safe. The picture is still there. The purpose of his brain has been kept sacred thus long after the man himself has sprouted up in graveyard grass. See! he lifts his ineffectual hand, and tries the frame. All safe! But is that a smile?—is it not, rather, a frown of deadly import, that darkens over the shadow of his features? The stout Colonel is dissatisfied! So decided is his look of discontent as to impart additional distinctness to his features; through which, nevertheless, the moonlight passes, and flickers on the wall beyond. Something has strangely vexed the ancestor! With a grim shake of the head, he turns away. Here come other Pyncheons, the whole tribe, in their half a dozen generations, jostling and elbowing one another, to reach the picture. We behold aged men and grandames, a clergyman with the Puritanic stiffness still in his garb and mien, and a red-coated officer of the old French war;[9] and there comes the shop-keeping Pyncheon of a century ago, with the ruffles turned back from his wrists; and there the periwigged and brocaded gentleman of the artist's legend,[10] with the beautiful and pensive Alice, who brings no pride out of her virgin grave. All try the picture frame. What do these ghostly people seek? A mother lifts her child, that his little hands may touch it! There is evidently a mystery about the picture, that perplexes these poor Pyncheons when they ought to be at rest. In a corner, meanwhile, stands the figure of an elderly man,[11] in a leather jerkin and breeches, with a carpenter's rule sticking out of his side pocket; he points his finger at the bearded Colonel and his descendants, nodding, jeering, mocking, and finally bursting into obstreperous, though inaudible laughter.

Indulging our fancy in this freak, we have partly lost the power of restraint and guidance. We distinguish an unlooked-for figure in our visionary scene. Among those ancestral people there is a young man, dressed in the very fashion of today: he wears a dark frock-coat, almost destitute of skirts, gray pantaloons, gaiter boots of patent leather, and has a finely wrought gold chain across his breast, and a little silver-headed whalebone stick in his hand. Were we to meet this figure at noonday, we should greet him as young Jaffrey Pyncheon, the Judge's only surviving child, who has been spending the last two years in foreign travel. If still in life, how comes his shadow hither? If dead, what a misfortune! The old Pyncheon property, together with the great estate acquired by the young man's father, would devolve on whom? On poor, foolish Clifford, gaunt Hepzibah, and rustic little Phoebe! But another and a greater marvel greets us! Can we believe our eyes? A stout, elderly gentleman has made his appearance; he has an aspect of eminent respectability, wears a black coat and pantaloons, of roomy width, and might be pronounced scrupulously neat in his attire, but for a broad crimson stain across his snowy neckcloth and down his shirt-bosom. Is it the Judge, or no? How can it be Judge Pyncheon? We discern his figure, as plainly as the flickering moonbeams can show us anything, still seated in the oaken chair! Be the apparition whose it may, it advances to the picture, seems to seize the frame, tries to peep behind it, and turns away, with a frown as black as the ancestral one.

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[8] The portrait of the first Colonel Pyncheon, who built the house, was, according to the supposed terms of his will, to remain fixed to the wall.

[9] The French and Indian War, 1754-1763.

[10] Holgrave, the daguerreotype artist, a minor character, tells the story of Gervayse Pyncheon, who in his effort to find the missing deed, allowed his daughter, Alice, to fall under the spell of one of the Maules, who was thought to have inherited the art of witchcraft. Neither then nor later did the Pyncheons discover the secret, but Holgrave, a descendant of the Maules', at the end of the story finds the deed hidden in a recess behind the picture of Colonel Pyncheon.

[11] Matthew Maule's son: he had built the house and hidden away the deed.

The fantastic scene just hinted at must by no means be considered as forming an actual portion of our story. We were betrayed into this brief extravagance by the quiver of the moonbeams; they dance hand-in-hand with shadows, and are reflected in the looking-glass, which, you are aware, is always a kind of window or doorway into the spiritual world. We needed relief, moreover, from our too long and exclusive contemplation of that figure in the chair. This wild wind, too, has tossed our thoughts into strange confusion, but without tearing them away from their one determined center. Yonder leaden Judge sits immovably upon our soul. Will he never stir again? We shall go mad, unless he stirs! You may the better estimate his quietude by the fearlessness of a little mouse, which sits on its hind legs, in a streak of moonlight, close by Judge Pyncheon's foot, and seems to meditate a journey of exploration over this great black bulk. Ha! what has startled the nimble little mouse? It is the visage of grimalkin, outside of the window, where he appears to have posted himself for a deliberate watch. This grimalkin has a very ugly look. Is it a cat watching for a mouse, or the devil for a human soul? Would we could scare him from the window!

Thank Heaven, the night is well-nigh past! The moonbeams have no longer so silvery a gleam, nor contrast so strongly with the blackness of the shadows among which they fall. They are paler, now; the shadows look gray, not black. The boisterous wind is hushed. What is the hour? Ah! the watch has at last ceased to tick; for the Judge's forgetful fingers neglected to wind it up, as usual, at ten o'clock, being half an hour or so before his ordinary bed-time,—and it has run down, for the first time in five years. But the great world-clock of Time still keeps its beat. The dreary night—for, oh, how dreary seems its haunted waste, behind us!—gives place to a fresh, transparent, cloudless morn. Blessed, blessed radiance! The day-beam—even what little of it finds its way into this always dusky parlor—seems part of the universal benediction, annulling evil, and rendering all goodness possible, and happiness attainable. Will Judge Pyncheon now rise up from his chair? Will he go forth, and receive the early sunbeams on his brow? Will he begin this new day,—which God has smiled upon, and blessed, and given to mankind,—will he begin it with better purposes than the many that have been spent amiss? Or are all the deep-laid schemes of yesterday as stubborn in his heart, and as busy in his brain, as ever?

In this latter case, there is much to do. Will the Judge still insist with Hepzibah on the interview with Clifford? Will he buy a safe, elderly gentleman's horse? Will he persuade the purchaser of the old Pyncheon property to relinquish the bargain in his favor? Will he see his family physician, and obtain a medicine that shall preserve him, to be an honor and blessing to his race, until the utmost term of patriarchal longevity? Will Judge Pyncheon, above all, make due apologies to that company of honorable friends, and satisfy them that his absence from the festive board was unavoidable, and so fully retrieve himself in their good opinion that he shall yet be Governor of Massachusetts? And, all these great purposes accomplished, will he walk the streets again, with that dog-day smile of elaborate benevolence, sultry enough to tempt flies to come and buzz in it? Or will he, after the tomb-like seclusion of the past day and night, go forth a humbled and repentant man, sorrowful, gentle, seeking no profit, shrinking from worldly honor, hardly daring to love God, but bold to love his fellow-man, and to do him what good he may? Will he bear about with him,—no odious grin of feigned benignity, insolent in its pretence, and loathsome in its falsehood,—but the tender sadness of a contrite heart, broken, at last, beneath its own weight of sin? For it is our belief, whatever show of honor he may have piled upon it, that there was heavy sin at the base of this man's being.

Rise up, Judge Pyncheon! The morning sunshine glimmers through the foliage, and, beautiful and holy as it is, shuns not to kindle up your face. Rise up, thou subtle, worldly, selfish, iron-hearted hypocrite, and make thy choice whether still to be subtle, worldly, selfish, iron-hearted, and hypocritical, or to tear these sins out of thy nature, though they bring the life-blood with them! The Avenger is upon thee! Rise up, before it be too late!

What! Thou art not stirred by this last appeal? No, not a jot! And there we see a fly,—one of your common house-flies, such as are always buzzing on the window-pane,—which has smelt out Governor Pyncheon, and alights, now on his forehead, now on his chin, and now, Heaven help us! is creeping over the bridge of his nose, towards the would-be chief-magistrate's wide-open eyes! Canst thou not brush the fly away? Art thou too sluggish? Thou man, that hadst so many busy projects, yesterday! Art thou too weak, that wast so powerful? Not brush away a fly? Nay, then, we give thee up!

And hark! the shop-bell rings. After hours like these latter ones, through which we have borne our heavy tale, it is good to be made sensible that there is a living world, and that even this old, lonely mansion retains some manner of connection with it. We breathe more freely, emerging from Judge Pyncheon's presence into the street before the Seven Gables.

1850-51 1851

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Born, Boston, 1803, died, Concord, Massachusetts, 1882. Emerson was born of ministerial ancestry, graduated at Harvard, 1821, studied theology, and in 1829 was made minister in the pulpit held by Cotton Mather a century before, now Unitarian. Four years later he left the formal ministry, though he continued to preach. After a tour abroad he settled at Concord in 1834. The remainder of his life was that of a lecturer and essayist. Collections of his poems were published in 1846, 1865, 1878. Conspicuous among his prose works are: *The American Scholar,* 1837; *Divinity College Address,* 1838; *Essays,* first series, 1841, second series, 1844; *Representative Men,* 1850; *The Conduct of Life,* 1860; *Letters and Social Aims,* 1875.

SELF RELIANCE[1]

"Ne te quaesiveris extra."[2]

Man is his own star and the soul that can
Render an honest and a perfect man,
Commands all light, all influence, all fate;
Nothing to him falls early or too late.
Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still.

Epilogue to Beaumont and Fletcher's *Honest Man's Fortunes.*

I read the other day some verses written by an eminent painter which were original and not conventional. The soul always hears an admonition in such lines, let the subject be what it may. The sentiment they instill is of more value than any thought they may contain. To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,—that is genius. Speak your latent conviction, and it shall be the universal sense; for the inmost in due time becomes the outmost,—and our first thought is rendered back to us by the trumpets of the Last Judgment. Familiar as the voice of the mind is to each, the highest merit we ascribe to Moses, Plato, and Milton is, that they set at naught books and traditions, and spoke not what men but what they thought. A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the luster of the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts: they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty.[3] Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-humored inflexibility then most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else, tomorrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another.

There is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better, for worse, as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till. The power which resides in him is new in nature, and none but he knows what that is which he can do, nor does he know until he has tried. Not for nothing one face, one character, one fact, makes much impression on him, and another none. This sculpture in the memory is not without pre-established harmony. The eye was placed where one ray should fall, that it might testify of that particular ray. We but half express ourselves, and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents. It may be safely trusted as proportionate and of good issues,[4] so it be faithfully imparted, but God will not have his work made manifest by cowards. A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace. It is a deliverance which does not deliver. In the attempt his genius deserts him; no muse befriends; no invention, no hope.

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[1] The work of Emerson can be profitably compared with that of Carlyle, his life-long friend. Its strength, its depth, its electric shock, are not for the superficial reader.

[2] "Seek not beyond thyself."

[3] It is such perfect molding of form to thought that sets apart the maker of literature from the mere maker of phrases. Compare also Browning,

"we love
First when we see them painted, things we have passed
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;
. . . Art was given for that;" *Fra Lippo Lippi,* l. 299.

3[Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string.] Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being. And we are now men, and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny; and not minors and invalids in a protected corner, not cowards fleeing before a revolution, but guides, redeemers, and benefactors, obeying the Almighty effort, and advancing on Chaos and the Dark.

4 What pretty oracles nature yields us on this text, in the face and behavior of children, babes, and even brutes! That divided and rebel mind, that distrust of a sentiment because our arithmetic has computed the strength and means opposed to our purpose, these have not. Their mind being whole, their eye is as yet unconquered, and when we look in their faces, we are disconcerted. Infancy conforms to nobody; all conform to it, so that one babe commonly makes four or five out of the adults who prattle and play to it. So God has armed youth and puberty and manhood no less with its own piquancy and charm, and made it enviable and gracious and its claims not to be put by, if it will stand by itself. Do not think the youth has no force, because he cannot speak to you and me. Hark! in the next room his voice is sufficiently clear and emphatic. It seems he knows how to speak to his contemporaries. Bashful or bold, then, he will know how to make us seniors very unnecessary.

The nonchalance of boys who are sure of a dinner, and would disdain as much as a lord to do or say aught to conciliate one, is the healthy attitude of human nature. A boy is in the parlor what the pit is in the playhouse; independent, irresponsible, looking out from his corner on such people and facts as pass by, he tries and sentences them on their merits, in the swift, summary way of boys, as good, bad, interesting, silly, eloquent, troublesome. He cumbers himself never about consequences, about interests; he gives an independent, genuine verdict. You must court him: he does not court you. But the man is as it were clapped into jail by his consciousness. As soon as he has once acted or spoken with *éclat* he is a committed person, watched by the sympathy or the hatred of hundreds, whose affections must now enter into his account. There is no Lethe[5] for this. Ah, that he could pass again into his neutrality! Who can thus avoid all pledges and having observed, observe again from the same unaffected, unbiased, unbribable, unaffrighted innocence, must always be formidable. He would utter opinions on all passing affairs, which being seen to be not private, but necessary, would sink like darts into the ear of men and put them in fear.

6 These are the voices which we hear in solitude, but they grow faint and inaudible as we enter into the world. Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members. Society is a joint-stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater. The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

7 Whoso would be a man, must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world. I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser, who was wont to importune me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within? my friend suggested,—"But these

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[4] Well proportioned to our needs or abilities and fitted to bring forth good.

[5] The river of forgetfulness in Hades.

impulses may be from below, not from above." I replied, "They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil's child, I will live then from the Devil." No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature. Good and bad are but names very readily transferable to that or this; the only right is what is after my constitution, the only wrong what is against it. A man is to carry himself in the presence of all opposition, as if every thing were titular and ephemeral but he. I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names, to large societies and dead institutions. Every decent and well-spoken individual affects and sways me more than is right. I ought to go upright and vital, and speak the rude truth in all ways. If malice and vanity wear the coat of philanthropy, shall that pass? If an angry bigot assumes this bountiful cause of Abolition, and comes to me with his last news from Barbadoes,[6] why should I not say to him, 'Go love thy infant; love thy wood-chopper; be good-natured and modest; have that grace; and never varnish your hard, uncharitable ambition with this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off. Thy love afar is spite at home.' Rough and graceless would be such greeting, but truth is handsomer than the affectation of love. Your goodness must have some edge to it,—else it is none. The doctrine of hatred must be preached as the counteraction of the doctrine of love when that pules and whines. I shun father and mother and wife and brother, when my genius calls me. I would write on the lintels of the door-post, *Whim.* I hope it is somewhat better than whim at last, but we cannot spend the day in explanation. Expect me not to show cause why I seek or why I exclude company. Then, again, do not tell me, as a good man did today, of my obligation to put all poor men in good situations. Are they *my* poor? I tell thee, thou foolish philanthropist, that I grudge the dollar, the dime, the cent, I give to such men as do not belong to me and to whom I do not belong. There is a class of persons to whom by all spiritual affinity I am bought and sold; for them I will go to prison, if need be; but your miscellaneous popular charities; the education at college of fools; the building of meeting-houses to the vain end to which many now stand; alms to sots; and the thousand-fold Relief Societies;—though I confess with shame I sometimes succumb and give the dollar, it is a wicked dollar which by and by I shall have the manhood to withhold.

Virtues are, in the popular estimate, rather the exception than the rule. There is the man *and* his virtues. Men do what is called a good action, as some piece of courage or charity, much as they would pay a fine in expiation of daily non-appearance on parade. Their works are done as an apology or extenuation of their living in the world,—as invalids and the insane pay a high board. Their virtues are penances. I do not wish to expiate, but to live. My life is for itself and not for a spectacle. I much prefer that it should be of a lower strain, so it be genuine and equal, than that it should be glittering and unsteady. I wish it to be sound and sweet, and not to need diet and bleeding. I ask primary evidence that you are a man, and refuse this appeal from the man to his actions. I know that for myself it makes no difference whether I do or forbear those actions which are reckoned excellent. I cannot consent to pay for a privilege where I have intrinsic right. Few and mean as my gifts may be, I actually am, and do not need for my own assurance or the assurance of my fellows any secondary testimony.

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think. This rule, equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is the harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it. It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.[7]

The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it scatters your force. It loses your time and blurs the impression of your character. If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible-society, vote with a great party either for the government or against it, spread your table like base housekeepers,—under all these screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are. And of course so much force is withdrawn from your proper life. But do your work,[8] and I shall know you.

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[6] One of the British West India islands; slavery was abolished there in 1834.

[7] Emerson shaped his own life by this bracing maxim.

[8] Cf. Carlyle: "Cast forth thy Act, thy Word, into the ever-living, ever-working Universe: it is a seed grain that cannot die; unnoticed today (says one), it will be found flourishing as a

Do your work, and you shall reinforce yourself. A man must consider what a blindman's-buff is this game of conformity. If I know your sect I anticipate your argument. I hear a preacher announce for his text and topic the expediency of one of the institutions of his church. Do I not know beforehand that not possibly can he say a new and spontaneous word? Do I not know that with all this ostentation of examining the grounds of the institution he will do no such thing? Do I not know that he is pledged to himself not to look but at one side, the permitted side, not as a man, but as a parish minister? He is a retained attorney, and these airs of the bench are the emptiest affectation. Well, most men have bound their eyes with one or another handkerchief, and attached themselves to some one of these communities of opinion. This conformity makes them not false in a few particulars, authors of a few lies, but false in all particulars. Their every truth is not quite true. Their two is not the real two, their four not the real four; so that every word they say chagrins us and we know not where to begin to set them right. Meantime nature is not slow to equip us in the prison-uniform of the party to which we adhere. We come to wear one cut of face and figure, and acquire by degrees the gentlest asinine expression. There is a mortifying experience in particular, which does not fail to wreak itself also in the general history; I mean "the foolish face of praise," the forced smile which we put on in company where we do not feel at ease in answer to conversation which does not interest us. The muscles, not spontaneously moved, but moved by a low usurping willfulness, grow tight about the outline of the face with the most disagreeable sensation.

11 For nonconformity the world whips you with its displeasure. And therefore a man must know how to estimate a sour face. The by-standers look askance on him in the public street or in the friend's parlor. If this aversation[9] had its origin in contempt and resistance like his own he might well go home with a sad countenance; but the sour faces of the multitude, like their sweet faces, have no deep cause, but are put on and off as the wind blows and a newspaper directs. Yet is the discontent of the multitude more formidable than that of the senate and the college. It is easy enough for a firm man who knows the world to brook the rage of the cultivated classes. Their rage is decorous and prudent, for they are timid, as being very vulnerable themselves. But when to their feminine rage the indignation of the people is added, when the ignorant and the poor are aroused, when the unintelligent brute force that lies at the bottom of society is made to growl and mow, it needs the habit of magnanimity and religion to treat it godlike as a trifle of no concernment.

12 The other terror that scares us from self-trust is our consistency; a reverence for our past act or word because the eyes of others have no other data for computing our orbit than our past acts, and we are loath to disappoint them.

3 But why should you keep your head over your shoulder? Why drag about this corpse of your memory, lest you contradict somewhat you have stated in this or that public place? Suppose you should contradict yourself; what then? It seems to be a rule of wisdom never to rely on your memory alone, scarcely even in acts of pure memory, but to bring the past for judgment into the thousand-eyed present, and live ever in a new day. In your metaphysics you have denied personality to the Deity: yet when the devout motions of the soul come, yield to them heart and life, though they should clothe God with shape and color. Leave your theory, as Joseph[10] his coat in the hand of the harlot, and flee.

14 A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall. Speak what you think now in hard words, and tomorrow speak what tomorrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict every thing you said today.—"Ah, so you shall be sure to be misunderstood."—Misunderstood. Is it so bad, then, to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates and Jesus, and Luther and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh.[11] To be great is to be misunderstood.

Banyan-grove (perhaps, alas, as a Hemlock-forest!) after a thousand years." *Sartor Resartus*, Bk. i., Ch. 5.

[9] hatred, aversion.

[10] *Genesis* xxxix.

[11] Pythagoras, a Greek philosopher was banished; Socrates because of his advanced views was given poison; Luther was imprisoned; Copernicus, who first proved that the sun, not the earth, is the center of the solar system, was doubted; Galileo, for his astronomical views, was condemned, and by being menaced with the torture of the Inquisition was made to abjure the Copernican theory; Sir Isaac Newton, who discovered the law of gravitation, waited years for recognition; all these like Christ dared to face disbelief.

I suppose no man can violate his nature. All the sallies of his will are rounded in by the law of his being, as the inequalities of Andes and Himmaleh are insignificant in the curve of the sphere. Nor does it matter how you gauge and try him. A character is like an acrostic or Alexandrian stanza,[12]—read it forward, backward, or across, it still spells the same thing. In this pleasing, contrite wood-life which God allows me, let me record day by day my honest thought without prospect or retrospect, and, I cannot doubt, it will be found symmetrical, though I mean it not and see it not. My book should smell of pines and resound with the hum of insects. The swallow over my window should interweave that thread or straw he carries in his bill into my web also. We pass for what we are. Character teaches above our wills. Men imagine that they communicate their virtue or vice only by overt actions, and do not see that virtue or vice emit a breath every moment.

There will be an agreement in whatever variety of actions, so they be each honest and natural in their hour. For of one will, the actions will be harmonious, however unlike they seem. These varieties are lost sight of at a little distance, at a little height of thought. One tendency unites them all. The voyage of the best ship is a zigzag line of a hundred tacks. See the line from a sufficient distance, and it straightens itself to the average tendency. Your genuine action will explain itself and will explain your other genuine actions. Your conformity explains nothing. Act singly, and what you have already done singly will justify you now. Greatness appeals to the future. If I can be firm enough today to do right, and scorn eyes, I must have done so much right before as to defend me now. Be it how it will, do right now. Always scorn appearances, and you always may. The force of character is cumulative. All the foregone days of virtue work their health into this. What makes the majesty of the heroes of the senate and the field, which so fills the imagination? The consciousness of a train of great days and victories behind. They shed an united light on the advancing actor. He is attended as by a visible escort of angels. That is it which throws thunder into Chatham's[13] voice, and dignity into Washington's port,[14] and America into Adams's[15] eye. Honor is venerable to us because it is no ephemeris. It is always ancient virtue. We worship it today because it is not of today. We love it and pay it homage, because it is not a trap for our love and homage, but is self-dependent, self-derived, and therefore of an old immaculate pedigree, even if shown in a young person.

I hope in these days we have heard the last of conformity and consistency. Let the words be gazetted and ridiculous henceforward. Instead of the gong for dinner, let us hear a whistle from the Spartan fife. Let us never bow and apologize more. A great man is coming to eat at my house. I do not wish to please him; I wish that he should wish to please me. I will stand here for humanity, and though I would make it kind, I would make it true. Let us affront and reprimand the smooth mediocrity and squalid contentment of the times, and hurl in the face of custom and trade and office, the fact which is the upshot of all history, that there is a great responsible Thinker and Actor working wherever a man works; that a true man belongs to no other time or place, but is the center of things. Where he is, there is nature. He measures you and all men and all events. Ordinarily, everybody in society reminds us of somewhat else, or of some other person. Character, reality, reminds you of nothing else; it takes place of the whole creation. The man must be so much that he must make all circumstances indifferent. Every true man is a cause, a country, and an age; requires infinite spaces and numbers and time fully to accomplish his design;—and posterity seem to follow his steps as a train of clients. A man Caesar is born, and for ages after we have a Roman Empire. Christ is born, and millions of minds so grow and cleave to his genius that he is confounded with virtue and the possible of man. An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man; as, Monachism, of the Hermit Anthony; the Reformation, of Luther; Quakerism, of Fox; Methodism, of Wesley; Abolition, of Clarkson. Scipio,[16] Milton called "the height of Rome"; and all history resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons.[17]

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[12] A mistake; Emerson means a palindrome, which is the same read backwards or forwards: for example, "Madam, I'm Adam."

[13] It is to the bold, imaginative energy of William Pitt, a brilliant orator, one of the greatest English prime ministers, that England owes her greatest achievements in empire.

[14] bearing

[15] Samuel Adams, one of the earliest and boldest leaders of the American Revolution.

[16] Saint Anthony, or Anthony the Great, an Egyptian of the third century A. D., is said to be the founder of asceticism. George Fox, 1624-1691, founder of the Society of Friends; John Wesley, 1703-1791, one of the first "Methodists," so called from their strict methods of living; Thomas Clarkson, 1760-1846, worker for the abolition of slavery; Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus Major, the great Roman general who defeated Hannibal in 202 B. C.

17 Let a man then know his worth, and keep things under his feet.[18] Let him not peep or steal, or skulk up and down with the air of a charity-boy, a bastard, or an interloper in the world which exists for him. But the man in the street, finding no worth in himself which corresponds to the force which built a tower or sculptured a marble god, feels poor when he looks on these. To him a palace, a statue, or a costly book have an alien and forbidding air, much like a gay equipage, and seem to say like that, "Who are you, Sir?" Yet they all are his, suitors for his notice, petitioners to his faculties that they will come out and take possession. The picture waits for my verdict: it is not to command me, but I am to settle its claims to praise. That popular fable of the sot who was picked up dead drunk in the street, carried to the duke's house, washed and dressed and laid in the duke's bed,[19] and, on his waking, treated with all obsequious ceremony like the duke, and assured that he had been insane, owes its popularity to the fact that it symbolizes so well the state of man, who is in the world a sort of sot, but now and then wakes up, exercises his reason, and finds himself a true prince.

18 Our reading is mendicant and sycophantic. In history our imagination plays us false. Kingdom and lordship, power and estate, are a gaudier vocabulary than private John and Edward in a small house and common day's work; but the things of life are the same to both; the sum total of both is the same. Why all this deference to Alfred and Scanderbeg and Gustavus?[20] Suppose they were virtuous; did they wear out virtue? As great a stake depends on your private act today as followed their public and renowned steps. When private men shall act with original views, the luster will be transferred from the actions of kings to those of gentlemen.

19 The world has been instructed by its kings, who have so magnetized the eyes of nations. It has been taught by this colossal symbol the mutual reverence that is due from man to man. The joyful loyalty with which men have everywhere suffered the king, the noble, or the great proprietor to walk among them by a law of his own, make his own scale of men and things and reverse theirs, pay for benefits not with money but with honor, and represent the law in his person, was the hieroglyphic by which they obscurely signified their consciousness of their own right and comeliness, the right of every man.

20 The magnetism which all original action exerts is explained when we inquire the reason of self-trust. Who is the Trustee? What is the aboriginal Self, on which a universal reliance may be grounded? What is the nature and power of that science-baffling star, without parallax,[21] without calculable elements, which shoots a ray of beauty even into trivial and impure actions, if the least mark of independence appear? The inquiry leads us to that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct. We denote this primary wisdom as Intuition, whilst all later teachings are tuitions. In that deep force, the last fact behind which analysis cannot go, all things find their common origin. For the sense of being which in calm hours rises, we know not how, in the soul, is not diverse from things, from space, from light, from time, from man, but one with them, and proceeds obviously from the same source whence their life and being also proceeds. We first share the life by which things exist, and afterwards see them as appearances in nature, and forget that we have shared their cause. Here is the fountain of action and of thought. Here are the lungs of that inspiration which giveth man wisdom, and which cannot be denied without impiety and atheism. We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity. When we discern justice, when we discern truth we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams. If we ask whence this comes, if we seek to pry into the soul that causes, all philosophy is at fault. Its presence or its absence is all we can affirm. Every man discriminates between the volun-

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[17] Cf. Carlyle: "Universal history, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the history of the great men who have worked here." "In all epochs of the world's history we shall find the great man to have been the indispensable savior of his epoch;—the lightning without which the fuel never would have burnt." *Heroes and Hero Worship: The Hero as Divinity.*

[18] Cf. the old lama of Thibet, in Kipling's *Kim*, whose aim was to get free from the Wheel of Things, upon which most men are bound.

[19] The oldest version is probably *The Story of The Sleeper Awakened* in *The Arabian Nights*. See also *The Taming of the Shrew*, induction.

[20] Alfred the Great was King of England, 871-901; Scanderbeg Bey, in the 15th century, bravely defended his principality of Albania against the encroachments of Turkey; Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, 1611-32, was a great Protestant leader in the Thirty Years' War.

[21] Without apparent displacement as seen from two different stations and hence too far distant to be measured by ordinary means.

tary acts of his mind, and his involuntary perceptions, and knows that to his involuntary perceptions a perfect faith is due. He may err in the expression of them, but he knows that these things are so, like day and night, not to be disputed. My wilful actions and acquisitions are but roving;—the idlest reverie, the faintest native emotion, command my curiosity and respect. Thoughtless people contradict as readily the statement of perceptions as of opinions, or rather much more readily; for, they do not distinguish between perception and notion. They fancy that I choose to see this or that thing. But perception is not whimsical, but fatal. If I see a trait, my children will see it after me, and in course of time all mankind,—although it may chance that no one has seen it before me. For my perception of it is as much a fact as the sun.

21 The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure that it is profane to seek to interpose helps. It must be that when God speaketh he should communicate, not one thing, but all things; should fill the world with his voice; should scatter forth light, nature, time, souls, from the center of the present thought; and new date and new create the whole. Whenever a mind is simple and receives a divine wisdom, old things pass away,—means, teachers, texts, temples fall; it lives now, and absorbs past and future into the present hour. All things are made sacred by relation to it,—one as much as another. All things are dissolved to their center by their cause, and in the universal miracle petty and particular miracles disappear. If, therefore, a man claims to know and speak of God and carries you backward to the phraseology of some old moldered nation in another country, in another world, believe him not. Is the acorn better than the oak which is its fulness and completion? Is the parent better than the child into whom he has cast his ripened being? Whence then this worship of the past? The centuries are conspirators against the sanity and authority of the soul. Time and space are but physiological colors which the eye makes, but the soul is light; where it is, is day; where it was, is night; and history is an impertinence and an injury if it be any thing more than a cheerful apologue or parable of my being and becoming.[22]

22 Man is timid and apologetic; he is no longer upright; he dares not say 'I think,' 'I am,' but quotes some saint or sage. He is ashamed before the blade of grass or the blowing rose. These roses under my window make no reference to former roses or to better ones; they are for what they are; they exist with God today. There is no time to them. There is simply the rose; it is perfect in every moment of its existence. Before a leaf-bud has burst, its whole life acts; in the full-blown flower there is no more; in the leafless root there is no less. Its nature is satisfied and it satisfies nature in all moments alike. But man postpones or remembers; he does not live in the present, but with reverted eye laments the past, or, heedless of the riches that surround him, stands on tiptoe to foresee the future. He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with nature in the present, above time.

23 This should be plain enough. Yet see what strong intellects dare not yet hear God himself unless he speak the phraseology of I know not what David, or Jeremiah, or Paul. We shall not always set so great a price on a few texts, on a few lives. We are like children who repeat by rote the sentences of grandames and tutors, and, as they grow older, of the men of talents and character they chance to see,—painfully recollecting the exact words they spoke; afterwards, when they come into the point of view which those had who uttered these sayings, they understand them and are willing to let the words go; for at any time they can use words as good when occasion comes. If we live truly, we shall see truly. It is as easy for the strong man to be strong, as it is for the weak to be weak. When we have new perception, we shall gladly disburden the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish. When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

24 And now at last the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition. That thought, by what I can now nearest approach to say it, is this. When good is near you, when you have life in yourself, it is not by any known or accustomed way; you shall not discern the footprints of any other; you shall not see the face of man; you shall not hear any name;—the way, the thought, the good, shall be wholly strange and new. It shall exclude example and experience. You take the way from man, not to man. All persons that

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[22] Cf. Carlyle: "Think well, thou too wilt find that Space is but a mode of our human sense, so likewise Time; there *is* no Space and no Time: WE are—we know not what;—light—sparkles floating in the æther of Deity!" *Sartor Resartus,* Bk. i. Ch. 8.

ever existed are its forgotten ministers. Fear and hope are alike beneath it. There is somewhat low even in hope. In the hour of vision there is nothing that can be called gratitude, nor properly joy. The soul raised over passion beholds identity and eternal causation, perceives the self-existence of Truth and Right, and calms itself with knowing that all things go well. Vast spaces of nature, the Atlantic Ocean, the South Sea,—long intervals of time, years, centuries,—are of no account. This which I think and feel underlay every former state of life and circumstances, as it does underlie my present, and what is called life, and what is called death.

25 Life only avails, not the having lived. Power ceases in the instant of repose; it resides in the moment of transition from a past to a new state, in the shooting of the gulf, in the darting to an aim. This one fact the world hates, that the soul *becomes;* for that forever degrades the past, turns all riches to poverty, all reputation to a shame, confounds the saint with the rogue, shoves Jesus and Judas[23] equally aside. Why then do we prate of self-reliance? Inasmuch as the soul is present, there will be power not confident but agent.[24] To talk of reliance is a poor external way of speaking. Speak rather of that which relies, because it works and is. Who has more obedience than I masters me, though he should not raise his finger. Round him I must revolve by the gravitation of spirits. We fancy it rhetoric when we speak of eminent virtue. We do not yet see that virtue is Height and that a man or a company of men, plastic and permeable to principles, by the law of nature must overpower and ride all cities, nations, kings, rich men, poets, who are not.

26 This is the ultimate fact which we so quickly reach on this, as on every topic, the resolution of all into the ever-blessed ONE. Self-existence is the attribute of the Supreme Cause, and it constitutes the measure of good by the degree in which it enters into all lower forms. All things real are so by so much virtue as they contain. Commerce, husbandry, hunting, whaling, war, eloquence, personal weight, are somewhat, and engage my respect as examples of its presence and impure action. I see the same law working in nature for conservation and growth. Power is in nature the essential measure of right. Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdoms which cannot help itself. The genesis and maturation of a plant, its poise and orbit, the bended tree recovering itself from the wind, the vital resources of every animal and vegetable, are strong demonstrations of the self-sufficing, and therefore self-relying soul.

27 Thus all concentrates: let us not rove; let us sit at home with the cause. Let us stun and astonish the intruding rabble of men and books and institutions by a simple declaration of the divine fact. Bid the invaders take the shoes from off their feet,[25] for God is here within. Let our simplicity judge them, and our docility to our own law demonstrate the poverty of nature and fortune beside our native riches.

28 But now we are a mob. Man does not stand in awe of man, nor is the soul admonished to stay at home, to put itself in communication with the internal ocean, but it goes abroad to beg a cup of water of the urns of other men. We must go alone. Isolation must precede true society. I like the silent church before the service begins, better than any preaching. How far off, how cool, how chaste the persons look, begirt each one with a precinct or sanctuary! So let us always sit. Why should we assume the faults of our friend, or wife, or father, or child, because they sit around our hearth, or are said to have the same blood? All men have my blood and I have all men's. Not for that will I adopt their petulance or folly, even to the extent of being ashamed of it. But your isolation must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be elevation. At times the whole world seems to be in conspiracy to importune you with emphatic trifles. Friend, client, child, sickness, fear, want, charity, all knock at once at thy closet door and say,—"Come out unto us." But keep thy state; come not into their confusion. The power men possess to annoy me I give them by a weak curiosity. No man can come near me but through my act. "What we love that we have, but by desire we bereave ourselves of the love."

29 If we cannot at once rise to the sanctities of obedience and faith, let us at least resist our temptations; let us enter into the state of war, and wake Thor and Woden,[26] courage and constancy, in our Saxon breasts. This is to be done in our smooth times by speaking the truth. Check this lying hospitality and lying affection. Live no longer to[27] the expectation of these deceived and

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[23] I. e., the highest and the lowest

[24] active

[25] *Exodus* iii. 5.

[26] In Teutonic mythology Thor is the god of thunder and Woden or Odin the supreme father.

[27] according to

deceiving people with whom we converse. Say to them, O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I have lived with you after appearances hitherto. Henceforward I am the truth's. Be it known unto you that henceforward I obey no law less than the eternal law. I will have no covenants but proximities.[28] I shall endeavor to nourish my parents, to support my family, to be the chaste husband of one wife,—but these relations I must fill after a new and unprecedented way. I appeal from your customs. I must be myself. I cannot break myself any longer for you, or you. If you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier. If you cannot, I will still seek to deserve that you should. I will not hide my tastes or aversions. I will so trust that what is deep is holy, that I will do strongly before the sun and moon whatever inly rejoices me and the heart appoints. If you are noble, I will love you; if you are not, I will not hurt you and myself by hypocritical attentions. If you are true, but not in the same truth with me, cleave to your companions; I will seek my own. I do this not selfishly but humbly and truly. It is alike your interest, and mine, and all men's, however long we have dwelt in lies, to live in truth. Does this sound harsh today? You will soon love what is dictated by your nature as well as mine, and if we follow the truth it will bring us out safe at last.—But so may you give these friends pain. Yes, but I cannot sell my liberty and my power, to save their sensibility. Besides, all persons have their moments of reason, when they look out into the region of absolute truth; then will they justify me and do the same thing.

30 The populace think that your rejection of popular standards is a rejection of all standard, and mere antinomianism;[29] and the bold sensualist will use the name of philosophy to gild his crimes. But the law of consciousness abides. There are two confessionals, in one or the other of which we must be shriven. You may fulfil your round of duties by clearing yourself in the *direct*, or in the *reflex* way. Consider whether you have satisfied your relations to father, mother, cousin, neighbor, town, cat, and dog; whether any of these can upbraid you. But I may also neglect this reflex standard and absolve me to myself. I have my own stern claims and perfect circle. It denies the name of duty to many offices that are called duties. But if I can discharge its debts it enables me to dispense with the popular code. If any one imagines that this law is lax, let him keep its commandment one day.

31 And truly it demands something godlike in him who has cast off the common motives of humanity and has ventured to trust himself for a taskmaster. High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law, to himself, that a simple purpose may be to him as strong as iron necessity is to others!

2 If any man consider the present aspects of what is called by distinction *society*, he will see the need of these ethics. The sinew and heart of man seem to be drawn out, and we are become timorous, desponding whimperers. We are afraid of truth, afraid of fortune, afraid of death, and afraid of each other. Our age yields no great and perfect persons. We want men and women who shall renovate life and our social state, but we see that most natures are insolvent, cannot satisfy their own wants, have an ambition out of all proportion to their practical force and do lean and beg day and night continually. Our housekeeping is mendicant, our arts, our occupations, our marriages, our religion, we have not chosen, but society has chosen for us. We are parlor soldiers. We shun the rugged battle of fate, where strength is born.

33 If our young men miscarry in their first enterprises they lose all heart. If the young merchant fails, men say he is *ruined*. If the finest genius studies at one of our colleges, and is not installed in an office within one year afterwards in the cities or suburbs of Boston or New York, it seems to his friends and to himself that he is right in being disheartened and in complaining the rest of his life. A sturdy lad from New Hampshire or Vermont, who in turn tries all the professions, who *teams it, farms it, peddles,* keeps a school, preaches, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, buys a township, and so forth, in successive years, and always like a cat falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls. He walks abreast with his days and feels no shame in not 'studying a profession,' for he does not postpone his life, but lives already. He has not one chance, but a hundred chances. Let a Stoic[30] open the resources of man and tell men they are not leaning willows, but can and must detach themselves; that with the exercise of self-

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[28] I will make no promises for the future, but will do the nearest duty only.

[29] opposition to law; from the Greek ἀντί, against, and νόμος, law

[30] The Greek Stoics suppressed outward emotion of joy or grief, and held that virtue, not happiness, is the aim of life.

trust, new powers shall appear; that a man is the word[31] made flesh, born to shed healing to the nations, that he should be ashamed of our compassion, and that the moment he acts from himself, tossing the laws, the books, idolatries, and customs out of the window, we pity him no more but thank and revere him,—and that teacher shall restore the life of man to splendor and make his name dear to all history.

34 It is easy to see that a greater self-reliance must work a revolution in all the offices and relations of men; in their religion; in their education; in their pursuits; their modes of living; their association; in their property; in their speculative views.

35 1. In what prayers do men allow[32] themselves! That which they call a holy office[33] is not so much as brave and manly. Prayer looks abroad and asks for some foreign addition to come through some foreign virtue, and loses itself in endless mazes of natural and supernatural, and mediatorial and miraculous. Prayer that craves a particular commodity,—anything less than all good,—is vicious. Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul. It is the spirit of God pronouncing his works good. But prayer as a means to effect a private end is theft and meanness. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness. As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg. He will then see prayer in all action. The prayer of the farmer kneeling in his field to weed it, the prayer of the rower kneeling with the stroke of his oar, are true prayers heard throughout nature, though for cheap ends. Caratach, in Fletcher's Bonduca,[34] when admonished to inquire the mind of the god Audate, replies,—

> His hidden meaning lies in our endeavors;
> Our valors are our best gods.

36 Another sort of false prayers are our regrets. Discontent is the want of self-reliance: it is infirmity of will. Regret calamities if you can thereby help the sufferer; if not, attend your own work and already the evil begins to be repaired. Our sympathy is just as base. We come to them who weep foolishly and sit down and cry for company, instead of imparting to them truth and health in rough electric shocks, putting them once more in communication with their own reason. The secret of fortune is joy in our hands. Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide: him all tongues greet, all honors crown, all eyes follow with desire. Our love goes out to him and embraces him because he did not need it. We solicitously and apologetically caress and celebrate him because he held on his way and scorned our disapprobation. The gods love him because men hated him. "To the persevering mortal," said Zoroaster,[35] "the blessed Immortals are swift."

37 As men's prayers are a disease of the will, so are their creeds a disease of the intellect. They say with those foolish Israelites, "Let not God speak to us, lest we die. Speak thou, speak any man with us, and we will obey." Everywhere I am hindered of meeting God in my brother, because he has shut his own temple doors, and recites fables merely of his brother's, or his brother's brother's God. Every new mind is a new classification. If it prove a mind of uncommon activity and power, a Locke, a Lavoisier, a Hutton, a Bentham, a Fourier,[36] it imposes its classification on other men, and lo! a new system. In proportion to the depth of the thought, and so to the number of the objects it touches and brings within reach of the pupil, is his complacency. But chiefly is this apparent in creeds and churches, which are also classifications of some powerful mind acting on the great elemental thought of duty and man's relation to the Highest. Such is Calvinism, Quakerism, Swedenborgism. The pupil takes the same delight in subordinating every thing to the new terminology as a girl does who has just learned botany in seeing a new earth and new seasons thereby. It will happen for a time that the pupil will find his intellectual power has grown by the study of his master's mind. But in all unbalanced minds the classification is idolized, passes for the end and not for a speedily exhaustible means, so that the walls of the system blend to their eye in the remote horizon with the walls of the universe; the luminaries of heaven seem to them hung on the arch their master built. They cannot imagine how you aliens have any right to see,—how you can see; "It must be some-

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[31] The spirit of God; see *John* i. 1.

[32] justify, sanction

[33] An act of worship.

[34] John Fletcher, the Elizabethan dramatist, used the older names for Caractacus, the leader, and for Boadicea, the queen, of the Britons about 50 A. D. Audate was the Druid god of war.

[35] Zarathustra, the reputed founder of the ancient Persian religion.

[36] Locke and Bentham were English philosophers; Lavoisier was a French chemist, the chief founder of modern chemistry; Fourier was a French socialist; Hutton was a celebrated Scotch geologist.

how that you stole the light from us." They do not yet perceive that light, unsystematic, indomitable, will break into any cabin, even into theirs. Let them chirp awhile and call it their own. If they are honest and do well, presently their neat new pinfold[37] will be too strait and low, will crack, will lean, will rot and vanish, and the immortal light, all young and joyful, million-orbed, million-colored, will beam over the universe as on the first morning.

38 2. It is for want of self-culture that the superstition of Traveling, whose idols are Italy, England, Egypt, retains its fascination for all educated Americans. They who made England, Italy, or Greece venerable in the imagination did so by sticking fast where they were, like an axis of the earth. In manly hours we feel that duty is our place. The soul is no traveler; the wise man stays at home, and when his necessities, his duties, on any occasion call him from his house, or into foreign lands, he is at home still, and shall make men sensible by the expression of his countenance that he goes the missionary of wisdom and virtue, and visits cities and men like a sovereign and not like an interloper or a valet.

39 I have no churlish objection to the circumnavigation of the globe, for the purposes of art, of study, and benevolence, so that the man is first domesticated, or does not go abroad with the hope of finding somewhat greater than he knows. He who travels to be amused, or to get somewhat which he does not carry, travels away from himself, and grows old even in youth among old things. In Thebes, in Palmyra, his will and mind have become old and dilapidated as they. He carries ruins to ruins.

40 Traveling is a fool's paradise. Our first journeys discover to us the indifference of places. At home I dream that at Naples, at Rome, I can be intoxicated with beauty and lose my sadness. I pack my trunk, embrace my friends, embark on the sea, and at last wake up in Naples, and there beside me is the stern fact, the sad self, unrelenting, identical, that I fled from. I seek the Vatican[38] and the palaces. I affect to be intoxicated with sights and suggestions, but I am not intoxicated. My giant goes with me wherever I go.

41 3. But the rage of traveling is a symptom of a deeper unsoundness affecting the whole intellectual action. The intellect is vagabond, and our system of education fosters restlessness. Our minds travel when our bodies are forced to stay at home. We imitate; and what is imitation but the traveling of the mind? Our houses are built with foreign taste; our shelves are garnished with foreign ornaments; our opinions, our tastes, our faculties, lean, and follow the Past and the Distant. The soul created the arts wherever they have flourished. It was in his own mind that the artist sought his model. It was an application of his own thought to the thing to be done and the conditions to be observed. And why need we copy the Doric or the Gothic[39] model? Beauty, convenience, grandeur of thought, and quaint expression are as near to us as to any, and if the American artist will study with hope and love the precise thing to be done by him, considering the climate, the soil, the length of the day, the wants of the people, the habit and form of the government, he will create a house in which all these will find themselves fitted, and taste and sentiment will be satisfied also.

42 Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another you have only an extemporaneous, half possession. That which each can do best, none but his Maker can teach him. No man yet knows what it is, nor can, till that person has exhibited it. Where is the master who could have taught Shakspere? Where is the master who could have instructed Franklin, or Washington, or Bacon, or Newton? Every great man is a unique. The Scipionism[40] of Scipio is precisely that part he could not borrow. Shakspere will never be made by the study of Shakspere. Do that which is assigned you and you cannot hope too much or dare too much. There is at this moment, for you an utterance brave and grand as that of the colossal chisel of Phidias,[41] or trowel of the Egyptians, or the pen of Moses, or Dante, but different from all these. Not possibly will the soul, all rich, all eloquent, with thousand-cloven tongue, deign to repeat itself; but if you can hear what these patriarchs say, surely you can reply to them in the same pitch of voice; for the ear and the tongue are two organs of one nature. Abide in the simple and noble regions of thy life, obey thy heart, and thou shalt reproduce the Foreworld again.

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[37] A pound or enclosure for beasts.

[38] The Pope's palace, which contains famous art galleries, and libraries rich in ancient manuscripts.

[39] classic or medieval

[40] Scipio's daring resourcefulness often turned defeat into victory; see n. 16, p. 405.

[41] A Greek sculptor. See *The Problem*, p. 431, n. 1.

43 4. As our Religion, our Education, our Art look abroad, so does our spirit of society. All men plume themselves on the improvement of society, and no man improves.

44 Society never advances. It recedes as fast on one side as it gains on the other. It undergoes continual changes; it is barbarous, it is civilized, it is christianized, it is rich, it is scientific; but this change is not amelioration. For every thing that is given something is taken. Society acquires new arts and loses old instincts. What a contrast between the well-clad, reading, writing, thinking American, with a watch, a pencil, and a bill of exchange in his pocket, and the naked New Zealander, whose property is a club, a spear, a mat, and an undivided twentieth of a shed to sleep under! But compare the health of the two men, and you shall see that the white man has lost his aboriginal strength. If the traveler tell us truly, strike the savage with a broad axe and in a day or two the flesh shall unite and heal as if you struck the blow into soft pitch, and the same blow shall send the white to his grave.

45 The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, but lacks so much support of muscle. He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky. The solstice he does not observe; the equinox he knows as little; and the whole bright calendar of the year is without a dial in his mind. His notebooks impair his memory; his libraries overload his wit; the insurance-office increases the number of accidents; and it may be a question whether machinery does not encumber; whether we have not lost by refinement some energy, by a Christianity entrenched in establishments and forms, some vigor of wild virtue. For every Stoic was a Stoic; but in Christendom where is the Christian?

46 There is no more deviation in the moral standard than in the standard of height or bulk. No greater men are now than ever were. A singular equality may be observed between the great men of the first and of the last ages; nor can all the science, art, religion, and philosophy of the nineteenth century avail to educate greater men than Plutarch's[42] heroes, three or four and twenty centuries ago. Not in time is the race progressive. Phocion, Socrates, Anaxagoras, Diogenes, are great men, but they leave no class. He who is really of their class will not be called by their name, but will be his own man, and in his turn the founder of a sect. The arts and inventions of each period are only its costume, and do not invigorate men. The harm of the improved machinery may compensate its good. Hudson and Behring accomplished so much in their fishing-boats as to astonish Parry and Franklin,[43] whose equipment exhausted the resources of science and art. Galileo, with an opera-glass, discovered a more splendid series of celestial phenomena than any one since. Columbus found the New World in an undecked[44] boat. It is curious to see the periodical disuse and perishing of means and machinery which were introduced with loud laudation a few years or centuries before. The great genius returns to essential man. We reckoned the improvements of the art of war among the triumphs of science, and yet Napoleon conquered Europe by the bivouac, which consisted of falling back on naked valor and disencumbering it of all aids. The Emperor held it impossible to make a perfect army, says Las Casas,[45] "without abolishing our arms, magazines, commissaries, and carriages, until, in imitation of the Roman custom, the soldier should receive his supply of corn, grind it in his hand-mill, and bake his bread himself."

47 Society is a wave. The wave moves onward, but the water of which it is composed does not. The same particle does not rise from the valley to the ridge. Its unity is only phenomenal.[46] The persons who make up a nation today, next year die, and their experience with them.

48 And so the reliance on Property, including the reliance on governments which protect it, is the want of self-reliance. Men have looked away from themselves and at things so long that they have come to esteem the religious, learned, and civil institutions as guards of property, and they deprecate as-

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[42] Plutarch was a Greek historian whose *Parallel Lives* of forty-six Greeks and Romans is a classic; Phocion, an Athenian statesman put to death on a false charge of treason; Socrates, a Greek philosopher given the cup of poison because of his beliefs; Anaxagoras, a Greek philosopher, exiled on the charge of heresy; Diogenes, a Greek cynic philosopher famous for his eccentricities.

[43] Henry Hudson was a navigator of the seventeenth century; Vitus Bering, a Danish explorer of the eighteenth century; Sir William Edward Parry and Sir John Franklin, English navigators of the nineteenth century.

[44] A mistake of Emerson's.

[45] Voluntary exile with Napoleon at St. Helena, to whom the emperor dictated part of his memoirs.

[46] apparent

saults on these, because they feel them to be assaults on property. They measure their esteem of each other by what each has, and not by what each is. But a cultivated man becomes ashamed of his property, out of new respect for his nature. Especially he hates what he has if he see that it is accidental,—came to him by inheritance, or gift, or crime; then he feels that it is not having; it does not belong to him, has no root in him, and merely lies there because no revolution or no robber takes it away. But that which a man is, does always by necessity acquire, and what the man acquires, is living property, which does not wait the beck of rulers, or mobs, or revolutions, or fire, or storm, or bankruptcies, but perpetually renews itself wherever the man breathes. "Thy lot or portion of life," said the Caliph Ali,[47] "is seeking after thee; therefore be at rest from seeking after it." Our dependence on these foreign goods leads us to our slavish respect for numbers. The political parties meet in numerous conventions; the greater the concourse and with each new uproar of announcement, The delegation from Essex! The Democrats from New Hampshire! The Whigs of Maine! the young patriot feels himself stronger than before by a new thousand of eyes and arms. In like manner the reformers summon conventions and vote and resolve in multitude. Not so, O friends! will the God deign to enter and inhabit you, but by a method precisely the reverse. It is not only as a man puts off all foreign support, and stands alone, that I see him to be strong and to prevail. He is weaker by every recruit to his banner. Is not a man better than a town? Ask nothing of men, and in the endless mutation, thou only firm column must presently appear the upholder of all that surrounds thee. He who knows that power is inborn, that he is weak because he has looked for good out of him and elsewhere, and so perceiving, throws himself unhesitatingly on his thought, instantly rights himself, stands in the erect position, commands his limbs, works miracles; just as a man who stands on his feet is stronger than a man who stands on his head.

So use all that is called Fortune. Most men gamble with her, and gain all, and lose all, as her wheel rolls. But do thou leave as unlawful these winnings, and deal with Cause and Effect, the chancellors of God. In the Will work and acquire, and thou hast chained the wheel of Chance, and shalt sit hereafter out of fear from her rotations. A political victory, a rise of rents, the recovery of your sick, or the return of your absent friend, or some other favorable event raises your spirits, and you think good days are preparing for you. Do not believe it. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles.

1841

COMPENSATION

The wings of Time are black and white,
Pied with morning and with night.
Mountain tall and ocean deep
Trembling balance duly keep.
In changing moon, in tidal wave,
Glows the feud of Want and Have.
Gauge of more and less through space
Electric star and pencil plays.
The lonely Earth amid the balls
That hurry through the eternal halls,
A makeweight flying to the void,
Supplemental asteroid,
Or compensatory spark,
Shoots across the neutral Dark.

Man's the elm, and Wealth the vine;
Stanch and strong the tendrils twine:
Though the frail ringlets thee deceive,
None from its stock that vine can reave.
Fear not, then, thou child infirm,
There's no god dare wrong a worm.
Laurel crowns cleave to deserts
And power to him who power exerts;
Hast not thy share? On winged feet,
Lo! it rushes thee to meet;
And all that Nature made thy own,
Floating in air or pent in stone,
Will rive the hills and swim the sea
And, like thy shadow, follow thee.

Ever since I was a boy I have wished to write a discourse on Compensation: for it seemed to me when very young that on this subject life was ahead of theology and the people knew more than the preachers taught. The documents too from which the doctrine is to be drawn, charmed my fancy by their endless variety, and lay always before me, even in sleep; for they are the tools in our hands, the bread in our basket, the transactions of the street, the farm, and the dwelling-house, the greetings, the relations, the debts and credits, the influence of character, the nature and endowment of all men. It seemed to me, also, that in it might be shown men a ray of divinity, the present action of the soul of this world, clean from all vestige of tradition, and so the heart of man might be bathed by an inundation of eternal love, conversing with that which he knows was always and always must be, because it really is now. It appeared, moreover, that if this doctrine could be stated in terms with any resemblance to those bright intuitions in which this truth is sometimes revealed to us, it would be a star in many dark hours and crooked passages in our journey that would not suffer us to lose our way.

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[47] Fourth caliph or successor of Mohammed, 600-661 and supposed writer of a collection of proverbs.

2 I was lately confirmed in these desires by hearing a sermon at church. The preacher, a man esteemed for his orthodoxy, unfolded in the ordinary manner the doctrine of the Last Judgment. He assumed that judgment is not executed in this world; that the wicked are successful; that the good are miserable; and then urged from reason and from Scripture a compensation to be made to both parties in the next life. No offense appeared to be taken by the congregation at this doctrine. As far as I could observe, when the meeting broke up they separated without remark on the sermon.

3 Yet what was the import of this teaching? What did the preacher mean by saying that the good are miserable in the present life? Was it that houses and lands, offices, wine, horses, dress, luxury, are had by unprincipled men, whilst the saints are poor and despised; and that a compensation is to be made to these last hereafter, by giving them the like gratifications another day,—bank-stock and doubloons, venison and champagne? This must be the compensation intended; for what else? Is it that they are to have leave to pray and praise? to love and serve men? Why, that they can do now. The legitimate inference the disciple would draw was,—"We are to have *such* a good time as the sinners have now";—or, to push it to its extreme import, "You sin now; we shall sin by and by; we would sin now, if we could; not being successful we expect our revenge tomorrow."

4 The fallacy lay in the immense concession that the bad are successful; that justice is not done now. The blindness of the preacher consisted in deferring to the base estimate of the market of what constitutes a manly success, instead of confronting and convicting the world from the truth; announcing the presence of the soul; the omnipotence of the will: and so establishing the standard of good and ill, of success and falsehood.

5 I find a similar base tone in the popular religious works of the day and the same doctrines assumed by the literary men when occasionally they treat the related topics. I think that our popular theology has gained in decorum, and not in principle, over the superstitions it has displaced. [But men are better than this theology. Their daily life gives it the lie.] Every ingenuous and aspiring soul leaves the doctrine behind him in his own experience; and all men feel sometimes the falsehood which they cannot demonstrate. For men are wiser than they know. That which they hear in schools and pulpits without afterthought, if said in conversation would probably be questioned in silence. If a man dogmatize in a mixed company on Providence and the divine laws, he is answered by a silence which conveys well enough to an observer the dissatisfaction of the hearer, but his incapacity to make his own statement.

6 I shall attempt in this and the following chapter[1] to record some facts that indicate the path of the law of Compensation; happy beyond my expectation if I shall truly draw the smallest arc of this circle.

7 POLARITY, or action and reaction, we meet in every part of nature; in darkness and light; in heat and cold; in the ebb and flow of waters; in male and female; in the inspiration and expiration of plants and animals; equation of quantity and quality in the fluids of the animal body; in the systole and diastole of the heart; in the undulations of fluids, and of sound; in the centrifugal and centripetal gravity; in electricity, galvanism, and chemical affinity. Superinduce magnetism at one end of a needle; the opposite magnetism takes place at the other end. If the south attracts, the north repels. To empty here, you must condense there. An inevitable dualism bisects nature, so that each thing is a half, and suggests another thing to make it whole; as, spirit, matter; man, woman; odd, even; subjective, objective; in, out; upper, under; motion, rest; yea, nay.

8 Whilst the world is thus dual, so is every one of its parts. The entire system of things gets represented in every particle. There is somewhat that resembles the ebb and flow of the sea, day and night, man and woman, in a single needle of the pine, in a kernel of corn, in each individual of every animal tribe. The reaction, so grand in the elements, is repeated within these small boundaries. For example, in the animal kingdom the physiologist has observed that no creatures are favorites, but a certain compensation balances every gift and every defect. A surplusage given to one part is paid out of a reduction from another part of the same creature. If the head and neck are enlarged, the trunk and extremities are cut short.

9 The theory of the mechanic forces is another example. [What we gain in power is lost in time;[2] and the converse.] The periodic

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[1] The essay entitled *Spiritual Laws.*

[2] A law of mechanics.

or compensating errors of the planets is another instance.[3] The influences of climate and soil in political history are another. The cold climate invigorates. The barren soil does not breed fevers, crocodiles, tigers, or scorpions.

10 The same dualism underlies the nature and condition of man. Every excess causes a defect; every defect an excess. Every sweet hath its sour; every evil its good. Every faculty which is a receiver of pleasure has an equal penalty put on its abuse. It is to answer for its moderation with its life. For every grain of wit there is a grain of folly. For every thing you have missed, you have gained something else; and for every thing you gain, you lose something. If riches increase, they are increased that use them. If the gatherer gathers too much, nature takes out of the man what she puts into his chest; swells the estate, but kills the owner. Nature hates monopolies and exceptions. The waves of the sea do not more speedily seek a level from their loftiest tossing than the varieties of condition tend to equalize themselves. There is always some leveling circumstance that puts down the overbearing, the strong, the rich, the fortunate, substantially on the same ground with all others. Is a man too strong and fierce for society, and by temper and position a bad citizen,—a morose ruffian, with a dash of the pirate in him;—nature sends him a troop of pretty sons and daughters who are getting along in the dame's classes at the village school, and love and fear for them smooths his grim scowl to courtesy. Thus she contrives to intenerate[4] the granite and felspar, takes the boar out and puts the lamb in, and keeps her balance true.

11 The farmer imagines power and place are fine things. But the President has paid dear for his White House. It has commonly cost him all his peace, and the best of his manly attributes. To preserve for a short time so conspicuous an appearance before the world, he is content to eat dust before the real masters who stand erect behind the throne. Or, do men desire the more substantial and permanent grandeur of genius? Neither has this an immunity. He who by force of will or of thought is great, and overlooks thousands, has the charges of that eminence. With every influx of light comes new danger. Has he light? he must bear witness to the light, and always outrun that sympathy which gives him such keen satisfaction, by his fidelity to new revelations of the incessant soul. He must hate father and mother, wife and child. Has he all that the world loves and admires and covets?—he must cast behind him their admiration, and afflict them by faithfulness to his truth, and become a byword and a hissing.[5]

12 This law writes the laws of cities and nations. It is in vain to build or plot or combine against it. Things refuse to be mismanaged long. *Res nolunt diu male administrari.*[6] Though no checks to a new evil appear, the checks exist, and will appear. If the government is cruel, the governor's life is not safe. If you tax too high, the revenue will yield nothing. If you make the criminal code sanguinary, juries will not convict. If the law is too mild, private vengeance comes in. If the government is a terrific democracy, the pressure is resisted by an overcharge of energy in the citizen, and life glows with a fierce flame. The true life and satisfactions of man seem to elude the utmost rigors or felicities of condition, and to establish themselves with great indifferency under all varieties of circumstances. Under all governments the influence of character remains the same,—in Turkey and in New England about alike. Under the primeval despots of Egypt, history honestly confesses that man must have been as free as culture could make him.

13 These appearances indicate the fact that the universe is represented in every one of its particles. Every thing in nature contains all the powers of nature. Every thing is made of one hidden stuff; as the naturalist sees one type under every metamorphosis, and regards a horse as a running man, a fish as a swimming man, a bird as a flying man, a tree as a rooted man. Each new form repeats not only the main character of the type, but part for part all the details, all the aims, furtherances, hindrances, energies, and whole system of every other. Every occupation, trade, art, transaction is a compend of the world and a correlative of every other. Each one is an entire emblem of hu-

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[3] "The periodic inequalities of the planets are so small, because as a rule there is a nearly complete compensation effected at every few revolutions, so that the accelerations balance the retardations." Young, *General Astronomy*, p. 312.

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[5] Emerson was himself twice hissed;—once when making a political speech in favor of his friend Dr. Palfrey; and again when in 1861 at Wendell Phillips's request, he addressed an Anti-Slavery Society. He wrote in his Journal, "The mob roared and hissed whenever I attempted to speak, and after several attempts I withdrew." From *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, by James Elliott Cabot, Vol. ii, p. 598-9.

[6] Translated in the preceding sentence.

man life; of its good and ill, its trials, its enemies, its course and its end. And each one must somehow accommodate the whole man, and recite all his destiny.

14 The world globes itself in a drop of dew. The microscope cannot find the animalcule which is less perfect for being little.[7] Eyes, ears, taste, smell, motion, resistance, appetite, and organs of reproduction that take hold on eternity,—all find room to consist in the small creature. So do we put our life into every act. The true doctrine of omnipresence is, that God reappears with all his parts in every moss and cobweb. The value of the universe contrives to throw itself into every point. If the good is there, so is the evil; if the affinity, so the repulsion; if the force, so the limitation.

15 Thus is the universe alive. All things are moral. That soul, which within us is a sentiment, outside of us is a law. We feel its inspirations; out there in history we can see its fatal strength. "It is in the world, and the world was made by it." Justice is not postponed. A perfect equity adjusts its balance in all parts of life. *Οἱ κύβοι Διὸς ἀεὶ εὐπίπτουσι*,[8]—The dice of God are always loaded. The world looks like a multiplication table, or a mathematical equation, which, turn it how you will, balances itself. Take what figure you will, its exact value, nor more nor less, still returns to you. Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. What we call retribution is the universal necessity by which the whole appears wherever a part appears. If you see smoke, there must be fire. If you see a hand or a limb, you know that the trunk to which it belongs is there behind.

16 Every act rewards itself, or in other words integrates[9] itself, in a twofold manner; first in the thing, or in real nature; and secondly in the circumstance, or in apparent nature. Men call the circumstance the retribution. The causal retribution is in the thing, and is seen by the soul. The retribution in the circumstance is seen by the understanding; it is inseparable from the thing, but is often spread over a long time, and so does not become distinct until after many years. The specific stripes may follow late after the offense, but they follow because they accompany it. [Crime and punishment grow out of one stem. Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it.] Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end preëxists in the means, the fruit in the seed.

17 Whilst thus the world will be whole, and refuses to be disparted, we seek to act partially, to sunder, to appropriate; for example,—to gratify the senses, we sever the pleasure of the senses from the needs of the character. The ingenuity of man has always been dedicated to the solution of one problem,—how to detach the sensual sweet, the sensual strong, the sensual bright, etc., from the moral sweet, the moral deep, the moral fair; that is, again, to contrive to cut clean off this upper surface so thin as to leave it bottomless; to get a *one end,* without an *other end.* The soul says, "Eat"; the body would feast. The soul says, "The man and woman shall be one flesh and one soul"; the body would join the flesh only. The soul says, "Have dominion over all things to the ends of virtue"; the body would have the power over things to its own ends.

18 The soul strives amain to live and work through all things. It would be the only fact. All things shall be added unto it,—power, pleasure, knowledge, beauty. The particular man aims to be somebody; to set up for himself; to truck and higgle for a private good; and, in particulars, to ride that he may ride; to dress that he may be dressed; to eat that he may eat; and to govern, that he may be seen. Men seek to be great; they would have offices, wealth, power, and fame. [They think that to be great is to possess one side of nature,—the sweet, without the other side,—the bitter.]

19 This dividing and detaching is steadily counteracted. Up to this day, it must be owned, no projector has had the smallest success. The parted water reunites behind our hand. Pleasure is taken out of pleasant things, profit out of profitable things, power out of strong things, as soon as we seek to separate them from the whole. We can no more halve things and get the sensual good, by itself, than we can get an inside that shall have no outside, or a light without a shadow. "Drive out nature with a fork, she comes running back."[10]

20 Life invests itself with inevitable conditions, which the unwise seek to dodge, which one and another brags that he does not know; brags that they do not touch him;—

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[7] The amoebas, though they cannot be said to have eyes, ears, taste, and smell, are nevertheless sensitive to light, sound, and odors, and distinguish between food and other substances.

[8] Translated in the following sentence.

[9] makes a whole of

[10] Horace, *Epistles*, i. 10, 24.

but the brag is on his lips, the conditions are in his soul. If he escapes them in one part they attack him in another more vital part. If he has escaped them in form and in the appearance, it is because he has resisted his life, and fled from himself, and the retribution is so much death. So signal is the failure of all attempts to make this separation of the good from the tax, that the experiment would not be tried,—since to try it is to be mad,—but for the circumstance that when the disease began in the will, of rebellion and separation, the intellect is at once infected, so that the man ceases to see God whole in each object, but is able to see the sensual allurement of an object and not see the sensual hurt; he sees the mermaid's head but not the dragon's tail; and thinks he can cut off that which he would have, from that which he would not have. "How secret art thou who dwellest in the highest heavens in silence, O thou only great God, sprinkling with an unwearied Providence certain penal blindnesses upon such as have unbridled desires!"[11]

21 The human soul is true to these facts in the painting of fable, of history, of law, of proverbs, of conversation. It finds a tongue in literature unawares. Thus the Greeks called Jupiter, Supreme Mind; but having traditionally ascribed to him many base actions, they involuntarily made amends to reason by tying up the hands of so bad a god. He is made as helpless as a king of England.[12] Prometheus knows one secret which Jove must bargain for;[13] Minerva, another. He cannot get his own thunders; Minerva keeps the key of them.

> Of all the gods, I only know the keys
> That ope the solid doors within whose vaults
> His thunders sleep.[14]

A plain confession of the in-working of the All and of its moral aim. The Indian mythology ends in the same ethics;[15] and it would seem impossible for any fable to be invented and get any currency which was not moral. Aurora forgot to ask youth for her lover, and though Tithonus[16] is immortal, he is old. Achilles is not quite invulnerable; the sacred waters did not wash the heel by which Thetis held him. Siegfried, in the Niebelungen,[17] is not quite immortal, for a leaf fell on his back whilst he was bathing in the dragon's blood, and that spot which it covered is mortal. And so it must be. There is a crack in every thing God has made. It would seem there is always this vindictive circumstance stealing in at unawares even into the wild poesy in which the human fancy attempted to make bold holiday and to shake itself free of the old laws,—this back-stroke, this kick of the gun, certifying that the law is fatal; that in nature nothing can be given, all things are sold.

22 This is that ancient doctrine of Nemesis,[18] who keeps watch in the universe and lets no offense go unchastised. The Furies,[19] they said, are attendants on justice, and if the sun in heaven should transgress his path they would punish him. The poets related that stone walls and iron swords and leathern thongs had an occult sympathy with the wrongs of their owners; that the belt which Ajax gave Hector dragged the Trojan hero over the field at the wheels of the car of Achilles, and the sword which Hector gave Ajax was that on whose point Ajax fell.[20] They recorded that when the Thasians[21] erected a statue to Theogenes, a victor in the games, one of his rivals went to it by night, and endeavored to throw it down by repeated blows, until at last he moved it from its pedestal and was crushed to death beneath its fall.

23 This voice of fable has in it somewhat divine. It came from thought above the will of the writer. That is the best part of each writer which has nothing private in it; that which he does not know; that which flowed out of his constitution and not from his too active invention; that which in the study of a single artist you might not easily find, but in the study of many you would abstract as the spirit of them all. Phidias[22] it is not, but the work of man in that early Hellenic world that I would know. The name and circumstances of Phidias, however convenient for history, embarrass when we come to the highest criticism. We are to see that which man was tending to do in a given period, and was hindered, or, if you will, modified in doing, by the interfering voli-

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[11] From St. Augustine's *Confessions.* I. xviii.

[12] Dependent upon Parliament.

[13] Jupiter tried unsuccessfully to extort the secret of his own doom from Prometheus. See the *Prometheus* of Æschylus, and Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound.*

[14] Æschylus, *The Eumenides,* 830.

[15] God in everything, and everything leading to God.

[16] Cf. Tennyson, *Tithonus.*

[17] An ancient Teutonic epic.

[18] Greek goddess of retribution who allotted to each mortal his exact share of good and evil

[19] The Erinyes, or Eumenides, or Furiae—the avengers of iniquity.

[20] See *Iliad,* vii. 303; and Sophocles's *Ajax,* 865, 1029.

[21] Inhabitants of Thasos, an island off the coast of Thrace.

[22] See n. 1, p. 431.

tions of Phidias, of Dante, of Shakspere, the organ whereby man at the moment wrought.

24 Still more striking is the expression of this fact in the proverbs of all nations, which are always the literature of reason, or the statements of an absolute truth, without qualification. Proverbs, like the sacred books of each nation, are the sanctuary of the intuitions. That which the droning world, chained to appearances, will not allow the realist to say in his own words, it will suffer him to say in proverbs without contradiction. And this law of laws, which the pulpit, the senate, and the college deny, is hourly preached in all markets and workshops by flights of proverbs, whose teaching is as true and as omnipresent as that of birds and flies.

25 All things are double, one against another.—Tit for tat; an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; blood for blood; measure for measure; love for love.—Give, and it shall be given you.—He that watereth shall be watered himself.—What will you have? quoth God; pay for it and take it.—Nothing venture, nothing have.—Thou shalt be paid exactly for what thou hast done, no more, no less.—Who doth not work shall not eat.—Harm watch, harm catch.—Curses always recoil on the head of him who imprecates them.—If you put a chain around the neck of a slave, the other end fastens itself around your own.—Bad counsel confounds the adviser.—The Devil is an ass.[23]

26 It is thus written, because it is thus in life. Our action is overmastered and characterized above our will by the law of nature. We aim at a petty end quite aside from the public good, but our act arranges itself by irresistible magnetism in a line with the poles of the world.

27 A man cannot speak but he judges himself. With his will, or against his will, he draws his portrait to the eye of his companions by every word. Every opinion reacts on him who utters it. It is a thread-ball thrown at a mark, but the other end remains in the thrower's bag. Or, rather, it is a harpoon thrown at the whale, unwinding, as it flies, a coil of cord in the boat, and if the harpoon is not good, or not well thrown, it will go nigh to cut the steersman in twain or to sink the boat.

28 You cannot do wrong without suffering wrong. "No man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him," said Burke. The exclusive in fashionable life does not see that he excludes himself from enjoyment, in the attempt to appropriate it. The exclusionist in religion does not see that he shuts the door of heaven on himself, in striving to shut out others. Treat men as pawns and ninepins and you shall suffer as well as they. If you leave out their heart, you shall lose your own. The senses would make things of all persons; of women, of children, of the poor. The vulgar proverb, "I will get it from his purse or get it from his skin," is sound philosophy.

29 All infractions of love and equity in our social relations are speedily punished. They are punished by fear. Whilst I stand in simple relations to my fellow-man, I have no displeasure in meeting him. We meet as water meets water, or as two currents of air mix, with perfect diffusion and interpenetration of nature. But as soon as there is any departure from simplicity and attempt at halfness, or good for me that is not good for him, my neighbor feels the wrong; he shrinks from me as far as I have shrunk from him; his eyes no longer seek mine; there is war between us; there is hate in him and fear in me.

30 All the old abuses in society, universal and particular, all unjust accumulations of property and power, are avenged in the same manner. Fear is an instructor of great sagacity, and the herald of all revolutions. One thing he teaches, that there is rottenness where he appears. He is a carrion crow, and though you see not well what he hovers for, there is death somewhere. Our property is timid, our laws are timid, our cultivated classes are timid. Fear for ages has boded and mowed and gibbered over government and property. That obscene bird is not there for nothing. He indicates great wrongs which must be revised.

31 Of the like nature is that expectation of change which instantly follows the suspension of our voluntary activity. The terror of cloudless noon, the emerald of Polycrates,[24] the awe of prosperity, the instinct which leads every generous soul to impose on itself tasks of a noble asceticism and vicarious virtue, are the tremblings of the balance of justice through the heart and mind of man.

32 Experienced men of the world know very well that it is best to pay scot and lot[25] as they go along, and that a man often pays dear for a small frugality. The borrower

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[23] Very probably Emerson's own thought, though possibly suggested by the title of Ben Jonson's play, *The Devil Is an Ass.*

[24] Polycrates, tyrant of Samos, fearing, because of his great good fortune, to incur the envy of the gods, threw away a ring. But it was found in a fish and returned to him.

[25] taxes

runs in his own debt. Has a man gained any thing who has received a hundred favors and rendered none? Has he gained by borrowing, through indolence or cunning, his neighbor's wares, or horses, or money? There arises on the deed the instant acknowledgment of benefit on the one part and of debt on the other; that is, of superiority and inferiority. The transaction remains in the memory of himself and his neighbor; and every new transaction alters according to its nature their relation to each other. He may soon come to see that he had better have broken his own bones than to have ridden in his neighbor's coach, and that 'the highest price he can pay for a thing is to ask for it.'

33 A wise man will extend this lesson to all parts of life, and know that it is the part of prudence to face every claimant and pay every just demand on your time, your talents, or your heart. Always pay; for, first or last, you must pay your entire debt. Persons and events may stand for a time between you and justice, but it is only a postponement. You must pay at last your own debt. If you are wise you will dread a prosperity which only loads you with more. Benefit is the end of nature. But for every benefit which you receive, a tax is levied. He is great who confers the most benefits. He is base—and that is the one base thing in the universe—to receive favors and render none. In the order of nature we cannot render benefits to those from whom we receive them, or only seldom. But the benefit we receive must be rendered again, line for line, deed for deed, cent for cent, to somebody. Beware of too much good staying in your hand. It will fast corrupt and worm worms.[26] Pay it away quickly in some sort.

34 Labor is watched over by the same pitiless laws. Cheapest, say the prudent, is the dearest labor. What we buy in a broom, a mat, a wagon, a knife, is some application of good sense to a common want. It is best to pay in your land a skilful gardener, or to buy good sense applied to gardening; in your sailor, good sense applied to navigation; in the house, good sense applied to cooking, sewing, serving; in your agent, good sense applied to accounts and affairs. So do you multiply your presence, or spread yourself throughout your estate. But because of the dual constitution of things, in labor as in life there can be no cheating. The thief steals from himself. The swindler swindles himself. For the real price of labor is knowledge and virtue, whereof wealth and credit are signs. These signs, like paper money, may be counterfeited or stolen, but that which they represent, namely, knowledge and virtue, cannot be counterfeited or stolen. These ends of labor cannot be answered but by real exertions of the mind, and in obedience to pure motives. The cheat, the defaulter, the gambler, cannot extort the knowledge of material and moral nature which his honest care and pains yield to the operative. The law of nature is, Do the thing, and you shall have the power: but they who do not the thing have not the power.

35 Human labor, through all its forms, from the sharpening of a stake to the construction of a city or an epic, is one immense illustration of the perfect compensation of the universe. The absolute balance of Give and Take, the doctrine that every thing has its price,—and if that price is not paid, not that thing but something else is obtained, and that it is impossible to get any thing without its price,—is not less sublime in the columns of a ledger than in the budgets of states, in the laws of light and darkness, in all the action and reaction of nature. I cannot doubt that the high laws which each man sees ever implicated in those processes with which he is conversant, the stern ethics which sparkle on his chisel-edge, which are measured out by his plumb and foot-rule, which stand as manifest in the footing of the shop-bill as in the history of a state,—do recommend to him his trade, and though seldom named, exalt his business to his imagination.

36 The league between virtue and nature engages all things to assume a hostile front to vice. The beautiful laws and substances of the world persecute and whip the traitor. He finds that things are arranged for truth and benefit, but there is no den in the wide world to hide a rogue. Commit a crime, and the earth is made of glass. Commit a crime, and it seems as if a coat of snow fell on the ground, such as reveals in the woods the track of every partridge and fox and squirrel and mole. You cannot recall the spoken word, you cannot wipe out the foot-track, you cannot draw up the ladder, so as to leave no inlet or clew. Some damning circumstance always transpires. The laws and substances of nature—water, snow, wind, gravitation—become penalties to the thief.

37 On the other hand, the law holds with equal sureness for all right action. Love, and you shall be loved. All love is mathematically just, as much as the two sides of

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[26] breed worms

an algebraic equation. The good man has absolute good, which like fire turns every thing to its own nature, so that you cannot do him any harm; but as the royal armies sent against Napoleon,[27] when he approached cast down their colors and from enemies became friends, so disasters of all kinds, as sickness, offense, poverty, prove benefactors:—

> Winds blow and waters roll
> Strength to the brave, and Power and Deity;
> Yet in themselves are nothing.[28]

38 The good are befriended even by weakness and defect. As no man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him, so no man had ever a defect that was not somewhere made useful to him. The stag in the fable admired his horns and blamed his feet, but when the hunter came, his feet saved him, and afterwards, caught in the thicket, his horns destroyed him. Every man in his lifetime needs to thank his faults. As no man thoroughly understands a truth until he has contended against it, so no man has a thorough acquaintance with the hindrances or talents of men, until he has suffered from the one, and seen the triumph of the other over his own want of the same. Has he a defect of temper that unfits him to live in society? Thereby he is driven to entertain himself alone, and acquire habits of self-help; and thus, like the wounded oyster, he mends his shell with pearl.

39 Our strength grows out of our weakness. The indignation which arms itself with secret forces does not awaken until we are pricked and stung, and sorely assailed. A great man is always willing to be little. Whilst he sits on the cushion of advantages, he goes to sleep. When he is pushed, tormented, defeated, he has a chance to learn something; he has been put on his wits, on his manhood; he has gained facts; learns his ignorance; is cured of the insanity of conceit; has got moderation and real skill. The wise man throws himself on the side of his assailants. It is more his interest than it is theirs to find his weak point. The wound cicatrizes and falls off from him like a dead skin, and when they would triumph, lo! he has passed on invulnerable. Blame is safer than praise. I hate to be defended in a newspaper. As long as all that is said is said against me, I feel a certain assurance of success. But as soon as honeyed words of praise are spoken for me, I feel as one that lies unprotected before his enemies. In general, every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor. As the Sandwich Islander believes that the strength and valor of the enemy he kills passes into himself, so we gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

40 The same guards which protect us from disaster, defect, and enmity, defend us, if we will, from selfishness and fraud. Bolts and bars are not the best of our institutions, nor is shrewdness in trade a mark of wisdom. Men suffer all their life long under the foolish superstition that they can be cheated. But it is as impossible for a man to be cheated by any one but himself, as for a thing to be and not to be at the same time. There is a third silent party to all our bargains. The nature and soul of things takes on itself the guaranty of the fulfilment of every contract, so that honest service cannot come to loss. If you serve an ungrateful master, serve him the more. Put God in your debt. Every stroke shall be repaid. The longer the payment is withholden, the better for you; for compound interest on compound interest is the rate and usage of this exchequer.

41 The history of persecution is a history of endeavors to cheat nature, to make water run up hill, to twist a rope of sand. It makes no difference whether the actors be many or one, a tyrant or a mob. A mob is a society of bodies voluntarily bereaving themselves of reason and traversing its work. The mob is man voluntarily descending to the nature of the beast. Its fit hour of activity is night. Its actions are insane, like its whole constitution. It persecutes a principle; it would whip a right; it would tar and feather justice, by inflicting fire and outrage upon the houses and persons of those who have these. It resembles the prank of boys, who run with fire-engines to put out the ruddy aurora streaming to the stars. The inviolate spirit turns their spite against the wrongdoers. The martyr cannot be dishonored. Every lash inflicted is a tongue of fame; every prison, a more illustrious abode; every burned book or house enlightens the world; every suppressed or expunged word reverberates through the earth from side to side. Hours of sanity and consideration are always arriving to communities as to individuals, when the truth is seen, and the martyrs are justified.

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[27] Troops were sent by the Bourbon government against Napoleon, on his escape from Elba, but at sight of him they shouted "Vive l'Empereur" and joined his ranks.

[28] Wordsworth's sonnet, *Near Dover, September, 1802,* "Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood."

42 Thus do all things preach the indifferency of circumstances. The man is all. Every thing has two sides, a good and an evil. Every advantage has its tax. I learn to be content. But the doctrine of compensation is not the doctrine of indifferency. The thoughtless say, on hearing these representations,—What boots it to do well? there is one event to good and evil; if I gain any good I must pay for it; if I lose any good I gain some other; all actions are indifferent.

43 There is a deeper fact in the soul than compensation, to wit, its own nature. The soul is not a compensation, but a life. The soul *is*. Under all this running sea of circumstance, whose waters ebb and flow with perfect balance, lies the aboriginal abyss of real Being. Essence, or God, is not a relation, or a part, but the whole. Being is the vast affirmative, excluding negation, self-balanced, and swallowing up all relations, parts, and times within itself. Nature, truth, virtue, are the influx from thence. Vice is the absence or departure of the same. Nothing, Falsehood, may indeed stand as the great Night or shade, on which, as a background, the living universe paints itself forth; but no fact is begotten by it; it cannot work; for it is not.[29] It cannot work any good; it cannot work any harm. It is harm inasmuch as it is worse not to be than to be.

44 We feel defrauded of the retribution due to evil acts, because the criminal adheres to his vice and contumacy and does not come to a crisis or judgment anywhere in visible nature. There is no stunning confutation of his nonsense before men and angels. Has he therefore outwitted the law? Inasmuch as he carries the malignity and the lie with him he so far deceases from nature. In some manner there will be a demonstration of the wrong to the understanding also; but should we not see it, this deadly deduction makes square the eternal account.

45 Neither can it be said, on the other hand, that the gain of rectitude must be bought by any loss. There is no penalty to virtue; no penalty to wisdom; they are proper additions of being. In a virtuous action, I properly *am*; in a virtuous act I add to the world; I plant into deserts conquered from Chaos and Nothing and see the darkness receding on the limits of the horizon. There can be no excess to love; none to knowledge; none to beauty, when these attributes are considered in the purest sense. The soul refuses limits, and always affirms an Optimism, never a Pessimism.

46 His life is a progress, and not a station. His instinct is trust. Our instinct uses "more" and "less" in application to man, of the *presence of the soul,* and not of its absence; the brave man is greater than the coward; the true, the benevolent, the wise, is more a man and not less, than the fool and knave. There is no tax on the good of virtue; for that is the incoming of God himself, or absolute existence, without any comparative. Material good has its tax, and if it came without desert or sweat, has no root in me, and the next wind will blow it away. But all the good of nature is the soul's, and may be had, if paid for in nature's lawful coin, that is, by labor which the heart and the head allow. I no longer wish to meet a good I do not earn, for example to find a pot of buried gold, knowing that it brings with it new burdens. I do not wish more external goods,—neither possessions, nor honors, nor powers, nor persons. The gain is apparent; the tax is certain. But there is no tax on the knowledge that the compensation exists and that it is not desirable to dig up treasure. Herein I rejoice with a serene eternal peace. I contract the boundaries of possible mischief. I learn the wisdom of St. Bernard,[30]—"Nothing can work me damage except myself; the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and never am a real sufferer but by my own fault."

47 In the nature of the soul is the compensation for the inequalities of condition. The radical tragedy of nature seems to be the distinction of More and Less. How can Less not feel the pain; how not feel indignation or malevolence towards More? Look at those who have less faculty, and one feels sad, and knows not well what to make of it. He almost shuns their eye; he fears they will upbraid God. What should they do? It seems a great injustice. But see the facts nearly and these mountainous inequalities vanish. Love reduces them as the sun melts the iceberg in the sea. The heart and soul of all men being one, this bitterness of *His* and *Mine* ceases. His is mine. I am my brother, and my brother is me. If I feel overshadowed and outdone by great neighbors, I can yet love; I can still receive; and he that

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[29] Cf. "A false man found a religion? Why, a false man cannot build a brick house! If he do not know and follow *truly* the properties of mortar, burnt clay, and what else he works in, it is no house that he makes, but a rubbish-heap." Carlyle, *Heroes and Hero Worship: The Hero as Prophet.*

[30] A French monk of the twelfth century, who preached the Second Crusade.

loveth maketh his own the grandeur he loves. Thereby I make the discovery that my brother is my guardian, acting for me with the friendliest designs, and the estate I so admired and envied is my own. It is the nature of the soul to appropriate all things. Jesus and Shakspere are fragments of the soul, and by love I conquer and incorporate them in my own conscious domain. His virtue,—is not that mine? His wit,—if it cannot be made mine, it is not wit.

48 Such also is the natural history of calamity. The changes which break up at short intervals the prosperity of men are advertisements of a nature whose law is growth. Every soul is by this intrinsic necessity quitting its whole system of things, its friends and home and laws and faith, as the shell-fish crawls out of its beautiful but stony case, because it no longer admits of its growth, and slowly forms a new house.[31] In proportion to the vigor of the individual, these revolutions are frequent, until in some happier mind they are incessant and all worldly relations hang very loosely about him, becoming, as it were, a transparent fluid membrane through which the living form is always seen, and not, as in most men, an indurated heterogeneous fabric of many dates, and of no settled character, in which the man is imprisoned. Then there can be enlargement, and the man of today scarcely recognizes the man of yesterday. And such should be the outward biography of man in time, a putting off of dead circumstances day by day, as he renews his raiment day by day. But to us, in our lapsed estate, resting, not advancing, resisting, not coöperating with the divine expansion, this growth comes by shocks.

49 We cannot part with our friends. We cannot let our angels go. We do not see that they only go out that archangels may come in. We are idolators of the old. We do not believe in the riches of the soul, in its proper eternity and omnipresence. We do not believe there is any force in today to rival or recreate that beautiful yesterday. We linger in the ruins of the old tent where once we had bread and shelter and organs, nor believe that the spirit can feed, cover, and nerve us again. We cannot again find aught so dear, so sweet, so graceful. But we sit and weep in vain. The voice of the Almighty saith, "Up and onward for evermore!" We cannot stay amid the ruins. Neither will we rely on the new; and so we walk ever with reverted eyes, like those monsters who look backwards.

50 And yet the compensations of calamity are made apparent to the understanding also, after long intervals of time. A fever, a mutilation, a cruel disappointment, a loss of wealth, a loss of friends, seems at the moment unpaid loss, and unpayable. But the sure years reveal the deep remedial force that underlies all facts. The death of a dear friend, wife, brother, lover, which seemed nothing but privation, somewhat later assumes the aspect of a guide or genius; for it commonly operates revolutions in our way of life, terminates an epoch of infancy or of youth which was waiting to be closed, breaks up a wonted occupation, or a household, or style of living, and allows the formation of new ones more friendly to the growth of character. It permits or constrains the formation of new acquaintances and the reception of new influences that prove of the first importance to the next years; and the man or woman who would have remained a sunny garden-flower, with no room for its roots and too much sunshine for its head, by the falling of the walls and the neglect of the gardener is made the banian[32] of the forest, yielding shade and fruit to wide neighborhoods of men.

1841

FRIENDSHIP

A ruddy drop of manly blood
The surging sea outweighs
The world uncertain comes and goes,
The lover rooted stays.
I fancied he was fled,
And, after many a year,
Glowed unexhausted kindliness
Like daily sunrise there.
My careful[1] heart was free again,—
O friend, my bosom said,
Through thee alone the sky is arched,
Through thee the rose is red,
All things through thee take nobler form,
And look beyond the earth,
And in the mill-round of our fate
A sun-path in thy worth.
Me too thy nobleness has taught
To master my despair;
The fountains of my hidden life
Are through thy friendship fair.

We have a great deal more kindness than is ever spoken. Maugre all the selfishness that chills like east winds the world, the whole human family is bathed with an element of love like a fine ether. How many persons we meet in houses, whom we scarcely speak to, whom yet we honor, and who honor us! How many we see in the street, or sit with in church, whom, though silently, we warmly rejoice to be with! Read the language of these wandering eye-beams. The heart knoweth.

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[31] Cf. Holmes, *The Chambered Nautilus*, p. 660.

[32] A fig tree of India which sends down from its branches roots that in turn become trunks. One tree group may become 1500 feet in circumference. See n. 8, p. 402.

[1] anxious

The effect of the indulgence of this human affection is a certain cordial exhilaration. In poetry, and in common speech, the emotions of benevolence and complacency which are felt towards others are likened to the material effects of fire; so swift, or much more swift, more active, more cheering, are these fine inward irradiations. From the highest degree of passionate love, to the lowest degree of good-will, they make the sweetness of life.

Our intellectual and active powers increase with our affection. The scholar sits down to write, and all his years of meditation do not furnish him with one good thought or happy expression; but it is necessary to write a letter to a friend,—and, forthwith, troops of gentle thoughts invest themselves, on every hand, with chosen words. See, in any house where virtue and self-respect abide, the palpitation which the approach of a stranger causes. A commended stranger is expected and announced, and an uneasiness betwixt pleasure and pain invades all the hearts of a household. His arrival almost brings fear to the good hearts that would welcome him. The house is dusted, all things fly into their places, the old coat is exchanged for the new, and they must get up a dinner if they can. Of a commended stranger, only the good report is told by others, only the good and new is heard by us. He stands to us for humanity. He is what we wish. Having imagined and invested him, we ask how we should stand related in conversation and action with such a man, and are uneasy with fear. The same idea exalts conversation with him. We talk better than we are wont. We have the nimblest fancy, a richer memory, and our dumb devil has taken leave for the time. For long hours we can continue a series of sincere, graceful, rich communications, drawn from the oldest, secretest experience, so that they who sit by, of our own kinsfolk and acquaintance, shall feel a lively surprise at our unusual powers. But as soon as the stranger begins to intrude his partialities, his definitions, his defects, into the conversation, it is all over. He has heard the first, the last and best he will ever hear from us. He is no stranger now. Vulgarity, ignorance, misapprehension are old acquaintances. Now, when he comes, he may get the order, the dress, and the dinner,—but the throbbing of the heart and the communications of the soul, no more.

What is so pleasant as these jets of affection which make a young world for me again. What so delicious as a just and firm encounter of two, in a thought, in a feeling? How beautiful, on their approach to this beating heart, the steps and forms of the gifted and the true! The moment we indulge our affections, the earth is metamorphosed; there is no winter and no night; all tragedies, all ennuis[2] vanish,—all duties even; nothing fills the proceeding eternity but the forms all radiant of beloved persons. Let the soul be assured that somewhere in the universe it should rejoin its friend, and it would be content and cheerful alone for a thousand years.

I awoke this morning with devout thanksgiving for my friends, the old and the new. Shall I not call God the Beautiful, who daily showeth himself so to me in his gifts? I chide society, I embrace solitude, and yet I am not so ungrateful as not to see the wise, the lovely, and the noble-minded, as from time to time they pass my gate. Who hears me, who understands me, becomes mine,—a possession for all time. Nor is nature so poor but she gives me this joy several times, and thus we weave social threads of our own, a new web of relations; and, as many thoughts in succession substantiate themselves, we shall by and by stand in a new world of our own creation, and no longer strangers and pilgrims in a traditionary globe. My friends have come to me unsought. The great God gave them to me. By oldest right, by the divine affinity of virtue with itself, I find them, or rather not I, but the Deity in me and in them deride and cancel the thick walls of individual character, relation, age, sex, circumstance, at which he usually connives, and now makes many one. High thanks I owe you, excellent lovers, who carry out the world for me to new and noble depths, and enlarge the meaning of all my thoughts. These are new poetry of the first Bard,—poetry without stop,—hymn, ode, and epic, poetry still flowing, Apollo and the Muses[3] chanting still. Will these, too, separate themselves from me again, or some of them? I know not, but I fear it not; for my relation to them is so pure, that we hold by simple affinity, and the Genius of my life being thus social, the same affinity will exert

[2] wearinesses

[3] Phœbus Apollo was the sun-god and god of music and poetry. The nine muses were goddesses that inspired in mortals love of poetry, of music, and of the other arts and sciences.

its energy on whomsoever is as noble as these men and women, wherever I may be.

I confess to an extreme tenderness of nature on this point. It is almost dangerous to me to "crush the sweet poison of misused wine"[4] of the affections. A new person is to me always a great event, and hinders me from sleep. I have often had fine fancies about persons which have given me delicious hours; but the joy ends in the day; it yields no fruit. Thought is not born of it; my action is very little modified. I must feel pride in my friend's accomplishments as if they were mine,—and a property in his virtues. I feel as warmly when he is praised, as the lover when he hears applause of his engaged maiden. We over-estimate the conscience of our friend. His goodness seems better than our goodness, his nature finer, his temptations less. Every thing that is his, his name, his form, his dress, books, and instruments,—fancy enhances. Our own thought sounds new and larger from his mouth.

Yet the systole and diastole of the heart are not without their analogy in the ebb and flow of love. Friendship, like the immortality of the soul, is too good to be believed. The lover, beholding his maiden, half knows that she is not verily that which he worships; and in the golden hour of friendship, we are surprised with shades of suspicion and unbelief. We doubt[5] that we bestow on our hero the virtues in which he shines, and afterwards worship the form to which we have ascribed this divine inhabitation. In strictness, the soul does not respect men as it respects itself. In strict science all persons underlie[6] the same condition of an infinite remoteness. Shall we fear to cool our love by mining for the metaphysical foundation of this Elysian temple?[7] Shall I not be as real as the things I see? If I am, I shall not fear to know them for what they are. Their essence is not less beautiful than their appearance, though it needs finer organs for its apprehension. The root of the plant is not unsightly to science, though for chaplets and festoons we cut the stem short. And I must hazard the production of the bald fact amidst these pleasing reveries, though it should prove an Egyptian skull[8] at our banquet. A man who stands united with his thought conceives magnificently of himself. He is conscious of a universal success, even though bought by uniform particular failures. No advantages, no powers, no gold or force, can be any match for him. I cannot choose but rely on my own poverty more than on your wealth. I cannot make your consciousness tantamount to mine. Only the star dazzles; the planet has a faint, moonlike ray. I hear what you say of the admirable parts and tried temper of the party you praise, but I see well that for all his purple cloaks I shall not like him, unless he is at last a poor Greek[9] like me. I cannot deny it, O friend, that the vast shadow of the Phenomenal[10] includes thee also in its pied and painted immensity,—thee, also, compared with whom all else is shadow. Thou art not Being, as Truth is, as Justice is,—thou art not my soul, but a picture and effigy of that. Thou hast come to me lately, and already thou art seizing thy hat and cloak. Is it not that the soul puts forth friends as the tree puts forth leaves, and presently, by the germination of new buds, extrudes the old leaf? The law of nature is alternation for evermore. Each electrical state superinduces the opposite. The soul environs itself with friends, that it may enter into a grander self-acquaintance or solitude; and it goes alone for a season, that it may exalt its conversation or society. This method betrays itself along the whole history of our personal relations. The instinct of affection revives the hope of union with our mates, and the returning sense of insulation recalls us from the chase. Thus every man passes his life in the search after friendship, and if he should record his true sentiment, he might write a letter like this to each new candidate for his love.

Dear Friend:—

If I was sure of thee, sure of thy capacity, sure to match my mood with thine, I should never think again of trifles in relation to thy comings and goings. I am not very wise; my moods are quite attainable; and I respect thy genius; it is to me as yet unfathomed; yet dare I not presume in thee a perfect intelligence of me, and so thou art to me a delicious torment. Thine ever, or never.

Yet these uneasy pleasures and fine pains are for curiosity, and not for life. They are not to be indulged. This is to weave cobweb, and not cloth. Our friendships hurry to short and poor conclusions, because we have made them a texture of wine and dreams, instead of the tough fiber of the human heart. The laws of friendship are austere and eternal, of one web with the laws of nature and of morals. But we have aimed at a swift and petty benefit, to suck a sudden sweetness. We snatch at the slowest fruit in the whole garden of God, which many summers and many winters must ripen. We seek our friend not sacredly, but with an adulterate passion which would appropriate him to ourselves. In vain. We are armed all over with subtle antagonisms, which, as soon as we meet, begin to play, and translate all poetry into stale prose. Almost all people descend to meet. All association must be a compromise, and, what is worst, the very flower and aroma of the flower of each of the beautiful natures disappears as they approach each other. What a perpetual disappointment is actual society, even of the virtuous and gifted! After interviews have been compassed with long foresight, we must be tormented presently by baffled blows, by sudden, unseasonable apathies, by epilepsies of wit and of animal spirits, in the heyday of friendship and thought.[11] Our faculties do not play us true, and both parties are relieved by solitude.

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[4] Milton, *Comus*, 47.

[5] suspect

[6] are subject to

[7] ideal structure

[8] A skeleton (mummy) was brought in towards the close of Egyptian banquets, to remind the feasters of the brevity of human life. See Plutarch, *Morals: The Banquet of the Seven Wise Men.*

[9] "A poor rogue." The phrase dates from the time of imperial Rome when the Greeks were in subjection to the Roman Empire.

[10] The physical universe in its largest sense.

I ought to be equal to every relation. It makes no difference how many friends I have and what content I can find in conversing with each, if there be one to whom I am not equal. If I have shrunk unequal from one contest, the joy I find in all the rest becomes mean and cowardly. I should hate myself, if then I made my other friends my asylum.

The valiant warrior famoused for fight,[12]
After a hundred victories, once foiled,
Is from the book of honor razed quite
And all the rest forgot for which he toiled.[13]

Our impatience is thus sharply rebuked. Bashfulness and apathy are a tough husk in which a delicate organization is protected from premature ripening. It would be lost if it knew itself before any of the best souls were yet ripe enough to know and own it. Respect the *naturlangsamkeit*[14] which hardens the ruby in a million years, and works in duration in which Alps and Andes come and go as rainbows. The good spirit of our life has no heaven which is the price of rashness. Love, which is the essence of God, is not for levity, but for the total worth of man. Let us not have this childish luxury in our regards, but the austerest worth; let us approach our friend with an audacious trust in the truth of his heart, in the breadth, impossible to be overturned, of his foundations.

The attractions of this subject are not to be resisted, and I leave, for the time, all account of subordinate social benefit, to speak of that select and sacred relation which is a kind of absolute, and which even leaves the language of love suspicious and common, so much is this purer, and nothing is so much divine.

I do not wish to treat friendships daintily, but with roughest courage. When they are real, they are not glass threads or frostwork, but the solidest thing we know. For now, after so many ages of experience, what do we know of nature, or of ourselves? Not one step has man taken toward the solution of the problem of his destiny. In one condemnation of folly stand the whole universe of men. But the sweet sincerity of joy and peace, which I draw from this alliance with my brother's soul is the nut itself whereof all nature and all thought is but the husk and shell. Happy is the house that shelters a friend! It might well be built, like a festal bower or arch, to entertain him a single day. Happier, if he know the solemnity of that relation, and honor its law! He who offers himself a candidate for that covenant comes up, like an Olympian,[15] to the great games where the first-born of the world are the competitors. He proposes himself for contests where Time, Want, Danger, are in the lists, and he alone is victor who has truth enough in his constitution to preserve the delicacy of his beauty from the wear and tear of all these. The gifts of fortune may be present or absent, but all the speed in that contest depends on intrinsic nobleness and the contempt of trifles. There are two elements that go to the composition of friendship, each so sovereign that I can detect no superiority in either, no reason why either should be first named. One is Truth. A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before him I may think aloud. I am arrived at last in the presence of a man so real and equal, that I may drop even those undermost garments of dissimulation, courtesy, and second thought, which men never put off, and may deal with him with the simplicity and wholeness with which one chemical atom meets another. Sincerity is the luxury allowed, like diadems and authority, only to the highest rank, *that* being permitted to speak truth, as having none above it to court or conform unto. Every man alone is sincere. At the entrance of a second person, hypocrisy begins. We parry and fend the approach of our fellow-man by compliments, by gossip, by amusements, by affairs. We cover up our thought from him under a hundred folds. I knew a man who under a certain religious frenzy cast off this drapery, and omitting all compliment and commonplace, spoke to the conscience of every person he encountered, and that with great insight and beauty. At first he was resisted, and all men agreed he was mad. But persisting, as indeed he could not help doing, for some time in this course, he attained to the advantage of bringing every man of his acquaintance into true relations with him. No man would think of speaking falsely with him, or of putting him off with any chat of markets or reading-rooms. But every man was constrained by so much sincerity to the like plaindealing, and what love of nature, what poetry, what symbol of truth he had, he did certainly show him. But to most of us society shows not its face and eye, but its side and its back. To stand in true relations with men in a false age is worth a fit of insanity, is it not? We can seldom go erect. Almost every man we meet requires some civility,—requires to be humored; he has some fame, some talent, some whim of religion or philanthropy in his head that is not to be questioned, and which spoils all conversation with him. But a friend is a sane man who exercises not my ingenuity, but me. My friend gives me entertainment without requiring any stipulation on my part. A friend, therefore, is a sort of paradox in nature. I who alone am, I who see nothing in nature whose existence I can affirm with equal evidence to my own, behold now the semblance of my being, in all its height, variety, and curiosity, reiterated in a foreign form; so that a friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature.

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[11] Cf. Browning, *Two in the Campagna*, which also suggests the incompleteness of human relations.

[12] made famous by his battles

[13] Shakspere, Sonnet xxv. but not accurately quoted.

[14] slowness of nature

[15] A victor in the games of ancient Greece held on the plain of Olympia. Or, one of the Olympian gods.

The other element of friendship is tenderness. We are holden to men by every sort of tie, by blood, by pride, by fear, by hope, by lucre, by lust, by hate, by admiration, by every circumstance and badge and trifle, but we can scarce believe that so much character can subsist in another as to draw us by love. Can another be so blessed, and we so pure, that we can offer him tenderness? When a man becomes dear to me I have touched the goal of fortune. I find very little written directly to the heart of this matter in books. And yet I have one text which I cannot choose but remember. My author[16] says,—"I offer myself faintly and bluntly to those whose I effectually am, and tender myself least to him to whom I am the most devoted." I wish that friendship should have feet, as well as eyes and eloquence. It must plant itself on the ground, before it walks over the moon. I wish it to be a little of a citizen, before it is quite a cherub. We chide the citizen because he makes love a commodity. It is an exchange of gifts, of useful loans; it is good neighborhood; it watches with the sick; it holds the pall at the funeral; and quite loses sight of the delicacies and nobility of the relation. But though we cannot find the god under this disguise of a sutler, yet, on the other hand, we cannot forgive the poet if he spins his thread too fine and does not substantiate his romance by the municipal virtues of justice, punctuality, fidelity, and pity. I hate the prostitution of the name of friendship to signify modish and worldly alliances. I much prefer the company of plowboys and tin-peddlers, to the silken and perfumed amity which celebrates its days of encounter by a frivolous display, by rides in a curricle, and dinners at the best taverns. The end of friendship is a commerce the most strict and homely that can be joined; more strict than any of which we have experience. It is for aid and comfort through all the relations and passages of life and death. It is fit for serene days, and graceful gifts, and country rambles, but also for rough roads and hard fare, shipwreck, poverty, and persecution. It keeps company with the sallies of the wit and the trances of religion. We are to dignify to each other the daily needs and offices of man's life, and embellish it by courage, wisdom, and unity. It should never fall into something usual and settled, but should be alert and inventive, and add rime and reason to what was drudgery.

Friendship may be said to require natures so rare and costly, each so well tempered and so happily adapted, and withal so circumstanced, (for even in that particular, a poet says, love demands that the parties be altogether paired,) that its satisfaction can very

[16] Montaigne, *Essays*, Vol. I. xxxix

seldom be assured. It cannot subsist in its perfection, say some of those who are learned in this warm lore of the heart, betwixt more than two. I am not quite so strict in my terms, perhaps because I have never known so high a fellowship as others. I please my imagination more with a circle of godlike men and women variously related to each other, and between whom subsists a lofty intelligence. But I find this law of *one to one* peremptory for conversation, which is the practice and consummation of friendship. Do not mix waters too much. The best mix as ill as good and bad. You shall have very useful and cheering discourse at several times with two several men, but let all three of you come together and you shall not have one new and hearty word. Two may talk and one may hear, but three cannot take part in a conversation of the most sincere and searching sort. In good company there is never such discourse between two, across the table, as takes place when you leave them alone. In good company, the individuals at once merge their egotism into a social soul exactly co-extensive with the several consciousnesses there present. No partialities of friend to friend, no fondnesses of brother to sister, of wife to husband, are there pertinent, but quite otherwise. Only he may then speak who can sail on the common thought of the party, and not poorly limited to his own. Now this convention, which good sense demands, destroys the high freedom of great conversation, which requires an absolute running of two souls into one.

No two men but, being left alone with each other, enter into simpler relations. Yet it is affinity that determines *which* two shall converse. Unrelated men give little joy to each other, will never suspect the latent powers of each. We talk sometimes of a great talent for conversation, as if it were a permanent property in some individuals. Conversation is an evanescent relation,—no more. A man is reputed to have thought and eloquence; he cannot, for all that, say a word to his cousin or his uncle. They accuse his silence with as much reason as they would blame the insignificance of a dial in the shade. In the sun it will mark the hour. Among those who enjoy his thought, he will regain his tongue.

Friendship requires that rare mean betwixt likeness and unlikeness that piques each with the presence of power and of consent in the other party. Let me be alone to the end of the world, rather than that my friend should overstep, by a word or a look, his real sympathy. I am equally balked by antagonism and by compliance. Let him not cease an instant to be himself. The only joy I have in his being mine is that the *not mine* is *mine.* I hate, where I looked for a manly furtherance, or at least a manly resistance, to find a mush of concession. Better be a nettle in the side of your friend than his echo. The condition which high friendship demands is ability to do without it. That high office requires great and sublime parts. There must be very two, before there can be very one. Let it be an alliance of two large, formidable natures, mutually beheld, mutually feared, before yet they recognize the deep identity which beneath these disparities unites them.

He only is fit for this society who is magnanimous; who is sure that greatness and goodness are always economy; who is not swift to intermeddle with his fortunes. Let him not intermeddle with this. Leave to the diamond its ages to grow, nor expect to accelerate the births of the eternal. Friendship demands a religious treatment. We talk of choosing our friends, but friends are self-elected. Reverence is a great part of it. Treat your friend as a spectacle. Of course he has merits that are not yours, and that you cannot honor, if you must needs hold him close to your person. Stand aside; give those merits room; let them mount and expand. Are you the friend of your friend's buttons, or of his thought? To a great heart he will still be a stranger in a thousand particulars, that he may come near in the holiest ground. Leave it to girls and boys to regard a friend as property, and to suck a short and all-confounding pleasure, instead of the noblest benefit.

Let us buy our entrance to this guild by a long probation. Why should we desecrate noble and beautiful souls by intruding on them? Why insist on rash personal relations with your friend? Why go to his house, or know his mother and brother and sisters? Why be visited by him at your own? Are these things material to our covenant? Leave this touching and clawing. Let him be to me a spirit. A message, a thought, a sincerity, a glance from him, I want, but not news, nor pottage. I can get politics and chat and neighborly conveniences from cheaper companions. Should not the society of my friend be to me poetic, pure, universal, and great as nature itself? Ought I to feel that our tie is profane in comparison with yonder bar of cloud that sleeps on the horizon, or that clump of waving grass that divides the brook? Let us not vilify, but raise it to that standard. The great, defying eye, that scornful beauty of his mien and action, do not pique yourself on reducing, but rather fortify and enchance. Worship his superiorities; wish him not less by a thought, but hoard and tell them all. Guard him as thy counterpart. Let him be to thee for ever a sort of beautiful enemy, untamable, devoutly revered, and not a trivial conveniency to be soon outgrown and cast aside. The hues of the opal, the light of the diamond, are not to be seen, if the eye is too near. To my friend I write a letter and from him I receive a letter. That seems to you a little. It suffices me. It is a spiritual gift worthy of him to give and of me to receive. It profanes nobody. In these warm lines the heart will trust itself, as it will not to the tongue, and pour out the prophecy of a godlier existence than all the annals of heroism have yet made good.

Respect so far the holy laws of this fellowship as not to prejudice its perfect flower by your impatience for its opening. We must be our own before we can be another's. There is at least this satisfaction in crime, according to the Latin proverb;—you can speak to your accomplice on even terms. *Crimen quos inquinat, æquat.*[17] To those whom we admire and love, at first we cannot. Yet the least defect of self-possession vitiates, in my judgment, the entire relation. There can never be deep peace between two spirits, never mutual respect, until in their dialogue each stands for the whole world.

What is so great as friendship, let us carry with what grandeur of spirit we can. Let us be silent,—so we may hear the whisper of the gods. Let us not interfere. Who set you to cast about what you should say to the select souls, or how to say any thing to such? No matter how ingenious, no matter how graceful and bland. There are innumerable degrees of folly and wisdom, and for you to say aught is to be frivolous. Wait, and thy heart shall speak. Wait until the necessary and everlasting overpowers you, until day and night avail themselves of your lips. The only reward of virtue is virtue; the only way to have a friend is to be one. You shall not come nearer a man by getting into his house. If unlike, his soul only flees the faster from you, and you shall never catch a true glance of his eye. We see the noble afar off and they repel us; why should we intrude? Late,—very late,—we perceive that no arrangements, no introductions, no consuetudes[18] or habits of society, would be of any avail to establish us in such relations with them as we desire,—but solely the uprise of nature in us to the same degree it is in them; then shall we meet as water with water; and if we should not meet them then, we shall not want them, for we are already they. In the last analysis, love is only the reflection of a man's own worthiness from other men. Men have sometimes exchanged names with their friends, as if they would signify that in their friend each loved his own soul.

The higher the style we demand of friendship, of course the less easy to establish it with flesh and blood. We walk alone in the world. Friends such as we desire are dreams and fables. But a sublime hope cheers ever the faithful heart, that elsewhere, in other regions of the universal power, souls are now acting, enduring, and daring, which can love us and which we can love. We may congratulate ourselves that the period of nonage, of follies, of blunders, and of shame, is passed in solitude, and when we are finished men, we shall grasp heroic hands in heroic hands. Only be admonished by what you already see, not to strike leagues of friendship with cheap persons, where no friendship can be. Our impatience betrays us into rash and foolish alliances which no God attends. By persisting in your path, though you forfeit the little you gain the great. You demonstrate yourself, so as to put yourself out of the reach of false relations, and you draw to you the first-born of the world,—those rare pilgrims whereof only one or two wander in nature at once, and before whom the vulgar great show as specters and shadows merely.

It is foolish to be afraid of making our ties too spiritual, as if so we could lose any genuine love. Whatever correction of our popular views we make from insight, nature will be sure to bear us out in, and though it seem to rob us of some joy, will repay us with a greater. Let us feel if we will the absolute insulation of man. We are sure that we have all in us. We go to Europe, or we pursue persons, or we read books, in the instinctive faith that these will call it out and reveal us to ourselves. Beggars all. The persons are such as we; the Europe, an old faded garment of dead persons; the books their ghosts. Let us drop this idolatry. Let us give over this mendicancy. Let us even bid our dearest friends farewell, and defy them, saying, "Who are you? Unhand me: I will be dependent no more." Ah! seest thou not, O brother, that thus we part only to meet again on a higher platform, and only be more each other's, because we are more our own? A friend is Janus-faced:[19] he looks to the past and the future. He is the child of all my foregoing hours, the prophet of those to come, and the harbinger of a greater friend.

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[17] Paraphrased in the preceding sentence.

[18] customs

I do then with my friends as I do with my books. I would have them where I can find them, but I seldom use them. We must have society on our own terms, and admit or exclude it on the slightest cause. I cannot afford to speak much with my friend. If he is great, he makes me so great that I cannot descend to converse. In the great days, presentiments hover before me in the firmament. I ought then to dedicate myself to them. I go in that I may seize them, I go out that I may seize them. I fear only that I may lose them receding into the sky in which now they are only a patch of brighter light. Then, though I prize my friends, I cannot afford to talk with them and study their visions, lest I lose my own. It would indeed give me a certain household joy to quit this lofty seeking, this spiritual astronomy or search of stars, and come down to warm sympathies with you; but then I know well I shall mourn always the vanishing of my mighty gods. It is true, next week I shall have languid moods, when I can well afford to occupy myself with foreign objects; then I shall regret the lost literature of your mind, and wish you were by my side again. But if you come, perhaps you will fill my mind only with new visions, not with yourself but with your lusters, and I shall not be able any more than now to converse with you. So I will owe to my friends this evanescent intercourse. I will receive from them, not what they have but what they are. They shall give me that which properly they cannot give, but which emanates from them. But they shall not hold me by any relations less subtle and pure. We will meet as though we met not, and part as though we parted not.

It has seemed to me lately more possible than I knew, to carry a friendship greatly, on one side, without due correspondence on the other. Why should I cumber myself with regrets that the receiver is not capacious? It never troubles the sun that some of his rays fall wide and vain into ungrateful space, and only a small part on the reflecting planet. Let your greatness educate the crude and cold companion. If he is unequal, he will presently pass away; but thou art enlarged by thy own shining, and, no longer a mate for frogs and worms, dost soar and burn with the gods of the empyrean. It is thought a disgrace to love unrequited. But the great will see that true love cannot be unrequited. True love transcends the unworthy object and dwells and broods on the eternal, and when the poor interposed mask crumbles, it is not sad, but feels rid of so much earth, and feels its independency the surer. Yet these things may hardly be said without a sort of treachery to the relation. The essence of friendship is entireness, a total magnanimity and trust. It must not surmise or provide for infirmity. It treats its object as a god, that it may deify both.

1841

THE RHODORA:

ON BEING ASKED, WHENCE IS THE FLOWER?

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew;
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The self-same Power that brought me there brought you.

1834 1839

EACH AND ALL

Little thinks, in the field, yon red-cloaked clown,
Of thee from the hill-top looking down;
The heifer that lows in the upland farm,
Far-heard, lows not thine ear to charm;
The sexton, tolling his bell at noon,
Deems not that great Napoleon
Stops his horse, and lists with delight,

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[19] The Roman god Janus, god of the beginning and ending of events, had two faces.

Whilst his files sweep round yon Alpine height;
Nor knowest thou what argument
Thy life to thy neighbor's creed has lent.
All are needed by each one,
Nothing is fair or good alone.
I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,
Singing at dawn on the alder bough;
I brought him home, in his nest, at even;
He sings the song, but it pleases not now,
For I did not bring home the river and sky;—
He sang to my ear,—they sang to my eye.
The delicate shells lay on the shore;
The bubbles of the latest wave
Fresh pearls to their enamel gave;
And the bellowing of the savage sea
Greeted their safe escape to me.
I wiped away the weeds and foam,
I fetched my sea-born treasures home;
But the poor, unsightly, noisome things
Had left their beauty on the shore
With the sun, and the sand, and the wild uproar.
The lover watched his graceful maid,
As 'mid the virgin train she strayed,
Nor knew her beauty's best attire
Was woven still by the snow-white choir.
At last she came to his hermitage,
Like the bird from the woodlands to the cage;—
The gay enchantment was undone,
A gentle wife, but fairy none.
Then I said, "I covet truth;
Beauty is unripe childhood's cheat;
I leave it behind with the games of youth"—
As I spoke, beneath my feet
The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,
Running over the club-moss burrs;
I inhaled the violet's breath;
Around me stood the oaks and firs;
Pine-cones and acorns lay on the ground;
Over me soared the eternal sky,
Full of light and of deity;
Again I saw, again I heard,
The rolling river, the morning bird;—
Beauty through my senses stole;
I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

1834? 1839

HYMN:

SUNG AT THE COMPLETION OF THE CONCORD MONUMENT

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set today a votive stone;
That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee.

1836 1837

THE HUMBLEBEE

Burly, dozing humblebee,
Where thou art is clime for me.
Let them sail for Porto Rique,
Far-off heats through seas to seek;
I will follow thee alone,
Thou animated torrid-zone!
Zigzag steerer, desert cheerer,
Let me chase thy waving lines;
Keep me nearer, me thy hearer,
Singing over shrubs and vines.

Insect lover of the sun,
Joy of thy dominion!
Sailor of the atmosphere;
Swimmer through the waves of air;
Voyager of light and noon;
Epicurean of June;
Wait, I prithee, till I come
Within earshot of thy hum,—
All without is martyrdom.

When the south wind, in May days,
With a net of shining haze
Silvers the horizon wall,
And, with softness touching all,
Tints the human countenance
With the color of romance,
And, infusing subtle heats,
Turns the sod to violets,
Thou, in sunny solitudes,
Rover of the underwoods,
The green silence dost displace
With thy mellow, breezy bass.

Hot midsummer's petted crone,
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone
Tells of countless sunny hours,
Long days, and solid banks of flowers;

Of gulfs of sweetness without bound
In Indian wildernesses found;
Of Syrian peace, immortal leisure,
Firmest cheer, and bird-like pleasure.

Aught unsavory or unclean
Hath my insect never seen;
But violets and bilberry bells,
Maple-sap and daffodels,
Grass with green flag half-mast high,
Succory to match the sky,
Columbine with horn of honey,
Scented fern, and agrimony,
Clover, catchfly, adder's-tongue
And brier-roses, dwelt among;
All beside was unknown waste,
All was picture as he passed.
Wiser far than human seer,
Yellow-breeched philosopher!
Seeing only what is fair,
Sipping only what is sweet,
Thou dost mock at fate and care,
Leave the chaff and take the wheat.
When the fierce northwestern blast
Cools sea and land so far and fast,
Thou already slumberest deep;
Woe and want thou canst outsleep;
Want and woe, which torture us,
Thy sleep makes ridiculous.
1837 1839

THE PROBLEM

I like a church; I like a cowl;
I love a prophet of the soul;
And on my heart monastic aisles
Fall like sweet strains, or pensive smiles;
Yet not for all his faith can see
Would I that cowled churchman be.

Why should the vest on him allure,
Which I could not on me endure?

Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias[1] brought;
Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;[2]
Out from the heart of nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below,—
The canticles of love and woe;
The hand that rounded Peter's dome,
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome,
Wrought in a sad sincerity;
Himself from God he could not free;
He builded better than he knew;—
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

Know'st thou what wove yon woodbird's nest
Of leaves, and feathers from her breast?
Or how the fish outbuilt her shell,
Painting with morn each annual cell?
Or how the sacred pine-tree adds
To her old leaves new myriads?
Such and so grew these holy piles,
Whilst love and terror laid the tiles.

Earth proudly wears the Parthenon,[3]
As the best gem upon her zone;
And Morning opes with haste her lids
To gaze upon the Pyramids;
O'er England's abbeys bends the sky,
As on its friends, with kindred eye;
For, out of Thought's interior sphere,
These wonders rose to upper air;
And Nature gladly gave them place,
Adopted them into her race,
And granted them an equal date
With Andes and with Ararat.

These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass.
The passive Master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned;
And the same power that reared the shrine,
Bestrode the tribes that knelt within.
Ever the fiery Pentecost[4]
Girds with one flame the countless host,
Trances the heart through chanting choirs,
And through the priest the mind inspires.

The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
The word by seers or sibyls[5] told,
In groves of oak,[6] or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind.
One accent of the Holy Ghost
The heedless world hath never lost.

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[1] The work of Phidias, the greatest Greek sculptor, one of whose masterpieces was a colossal statue of Zeus, or Jove, at Olympia, was highly regarded by the ancients for its moral value.

[2] The utterances of the oracle of the Pythian Apollo at Delphi, the greatest of all the Greek oracles, Emerson implies, were not the mere whims of priestcraft, but made for morality and justice.

[3] This temple of Pallas Athene at Athens is the purest example of Greek architecture.

[4] The fiftieth day after the Passover, and the crucifixion, when the Holy Spirit appeared as tongues of flame upon the Christians assembled in Jerusalem. See *Acts* ii. 1 *ff.*

[5] prophetesses

[6] The Druid priests of early Britain are supposed to have worshiped in oak groves.

I know what say the fathers wise,—
The Book itself before me lies,
Old *Chrysostom,*[7] best Augustine,[8]
And he who blent both in his line,
The younger *Golden Lips* or mines,
Taylor,[9] the Shakspere of divines.
His words are music in my ear,
I see his cowled portrait dear;
And yet, for all his faith could see,
I would not the good bishop be.
1839 1840

THE SNOW-STORM

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveler stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the house-mates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.

Come see the north wind's masonry.
Out of an unseen quarry evermore
Furnished with tile, the fierce artificer
Curves his white bastions with projected roof
Round every windward stake, or tree, or door.
Speeding, the myriad-handed, his wild work
So fanciful, so savage, naught cares he
For number or proportion. Mockingly,
On coop or kennel he hangs Parian[1] wreaths;
A swan-like form invests the hidden thorn;
Fills up the farmer's lane from wall to wall,
Maugre the farmer's sighs; and, at the gate
A tapering turret overtops the work.
And when his hours are numbered, and the world
Is all his own, retiring, as he were not,
Leaves, when the sun appears, astonished Art
To mimic in slow structures, stone by stone,
Built in an age, the mad wind's night-work,
The frolic architecture of the snow.
1841

COMPENSATION

Why should I keep holiday
When other men have none?
Why but because, when these are gay,
I sit and mourn alone?

And why, when mirth unseals all tongues
Should mine alone be dumb?
Ah! late I spoke to silent throngs,
And now their hour is come.
1834 1841

THE SPHINX[1]

The Sphinx is drowsy,
Her wings are furled,
Her ear is heavy,
She broods on the world.
"Who'll tell me my secret,
The ages have kept?—
I awaited the seer,
While they slumbered and slept;—

"The fate of the man-child;
The meaning of man;
Known fruit of the unknown,
Dædalian[2] plan;
Out of sleeping a waking,
Out of waking a sleep;
Life death overtaking;
Deep underneath deep?

"Erect as a sunbeam,
Upspringeth the palm;
The elephant browses
Undaunted and calm;
In beautiful motion
The thrush plies his wings;
Kind leaves of his covert,
Your silence he sings.

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[7] Saint John Chrysostom (golden mouthed), so named because of his eloquence, was a celebrated prelate of the Greek church in the fourth century A. D.

[8] Saint Augustine, 354-430 A. D., a great ecclesiastic of the Latin church, whose autobiography is found in his *Confessions.*

[9] Jeremy Taylor, a seventeenth century bishop of the English church, whose *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying* are rich in poetic imagination.

[1] I. e., as of Parian marble, from Paros, in the Ægean Sea.

[1] The colossal statue, the Great Sphinx, at Gizeh, Egypt, which has the head of a human being and the body of a lion, possibly dates back to about 5000 B. C. The Egyptians regarded the Sphinx as a destroyer. Later Greek myth represents the Theban sphinx as having been taught a riddle by the muses: "What is that which is four-footed, three-footed, and two-footed?" Whoever failed to guess it was devoured. Œdipus guessed rightly that it was man, who in infancy crawls, in manhood walks upright, in age uses a cane. The sphinx thereupon destroyed herself.

[2] Cunning, ingenious; from Dædalus, the inventive genius of Greek legend.

"The waves, unashamed,
In difference sweet,
Play glad with the breezes,
Old playfellows meet;
The journeying atoms,
Primordial wholes,
Firmly draw, firmly drive,
By their animate poles.

"Sea, earth, air, sound, silence,
Plant, quadruped, bird,
By one music enchanted,
One deity stirred,—
Each the other adorning,
Accompany still;
Night veileth the morning,
The vapor the hill.

"The babe by its mother
Lies bathed in joy;
Glide its hours uncounted,—
The sun is its toy;
Shines the peace of all being
Without cloud, in its eyes;
And the sum of the world
In soft miniature lies.

"But man crouches and blushes,
Absconds and conceals;
He creepeth and peepeth,
He palters and steals;
Infirm, melancholy,
Jealous glancing around,
An oaf, an accomplice,
He poisons the ground.

"Out spoke the great mother,
Beholding his fear;—
At the sound of her accents
Cold shuddered the sphere:—
'Who has drugged my boy's cup?
Who has mixed my boy's bread?
Who, with sadness and madness,
Has turned the man-child's head?'"

I heard a poet answer,
Aloud and cheerfully,
"Say on, sweet Sphinx! thy dirges
Are pleasant songs to me.
Deep love lieth under
These pictures of time;
They fade in the light of
Their meaning sublime.

"The fiend that man harries
Is love of the Best;
Yawns the pit of the Dragon,
Lit by rays from the Blest.
The Lethe[3] of Nature
Can't trance him again,
Whose soul sees the Perfect,
Which his eyes seek in vain.

"Profounder, profounder,
Man's spirit must dive;
To his aye-rolling orbit
No goal will arrive;
The heavens that now draw him
With sweetness untold,
Once found,—for new heavens
He spurneth the old.

"Pride ruined the angels,
Their shame them restores;
And the joy that is sweetest
Lurks in stings of remorse.
Have I a lover
Who is noble and free?—
I would he were nobler
Than to love me.

"Eterne alternation
Now follows, now flies;
And under pain, pleasure,—
Under pleasure, pain lies.
Love works at the center,
Heart-heaving alway;
Forth speed the strong pulses
To the borders of day.

"Dull Sphinx, Jove keep thy five wits.
Thy sight is growing blear;
Rue, myrrh, and cummin[4] for the Sphinx—
Her muddy eyes to clear!"—
The old Sphinx bit her thick lip,—
Said, "Who taught thee me to name?
I am thy spirit, yoke-fellow,
Of thine eye I am eyebeam.

"Thou art the unanswered question;
Couldst see thy proper eye,
Alway it asketh, asketh;
And each answer is a lie.
So take thy quest through nature,
It through thousand natures ply;
Ask on, thou clothed eternity;
Time is the false reply."

[3] The river of forgetfulness in Hades.
[4] Rue and myrrh are bitter herbs, cummin a kind of aromatic seed.

Uprose the merry Sphinx,
And crouched no more in stone;
She melted into purple cloud,
She silvered in the moon;
She spired into a yellow flame;
She flowered in blossoms red;
She flowed into a foaming wave;
She stood Monadnoc's[5] head.

Thorough a thousand voices
Spoke the universal dame:
"Who telleth one of my meanings,
Is master of all I am."

1841

FORBEARANCE

Hast thou named all the birds without a gun?
Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk?
At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse?
Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust?
And loved so well a high behavior,
In man or maid, that thou from speech refrained,
Nobility more nobly to repay?
O, be my friend, and teach me to be thine!

1842

TO RHEA[1]

Thee, dear friend, a brother soothes,
Not with flatteries, but truths,
Which tarnish not, but purify
To light which dims the morning's eye.
I have come from the spring-woods,
From the fragrant solitudes;—
Listen what the poplar-tree
And murmuring waters counseled me.

If with love thy heart has burned;
If thy love is unreturned;
Hide thy grief within thy breast,
Though it tear thee unexpressed;
For when love has once departed
From the eyes of the false-hearted,
And one by one has torn off quite
The bandages of purple light;
Though thou wert the loveliest
Form the soul had ever dressed,
Thou shalt seem, in each reply,
A vixen to his altered eye;
Thy softest pleadings seem too bold,
Thy praying lute shall seem to scold;
Though thou kept the straightest road,
Yet thou errest far and broad.

But thou shalt do as do the gods
In their cloudless periods;
For of this lore be thou sure,—
Though thou forget, the gods, secure,
Forget never their command,
But make the statute of this land.
As they lead, so follow all,
Ever have done, ever shall.
Warning to the blind and deaf,
'Tis written on the iron leaf,[2]
Who drinks of Cupid's nectar cup
Loveth downward, and not up;
Therefore, who loves, of gods or men,
Shall not by the same be loved again;
His sweetheart's idolatry
Falls, in turn, a new degree.
When a god is once beguiled
By beauty of a mortal child,
And by her radiant youth delighted,
He is not fooled, but warily knoweth
His love shall never be requited.
And thus the wise Immortal doeth.—
'Tis his study and delight
To bless that creature day and night;
From all evils to defend her;
In her lap to pour all splendor;
To ransack earth for riches rare,
And fetch her stars to deck her hair:
He mixes music with her thoughts,
And saddens her with heavenly doubts:
All grace, all good his great heart knows
Profuse in love, the king bestows:
Saying, "Hearken! Earth, Sea, Air!
This monument of my despair
Build I to the All-Good, All-Fair.
Not for a private good,
But I, from my beatitude,
Albeit scorned as none was scorned,
Adorn her as was none adorned.
I make this maiden an ensample
To Nature, through her kingdoms ample,
Whereby to model newer races,
Statelier forms, and fairer faces;
To carry man to new degrees
Of power, and of comeliness.
These presents be the hostages
Which I pawn for my release.
See to thyself, O Universe!

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[5] A mountain in New Hampshire.

[1] Rhea, recognized by the ancients as a deity of the earth, seems in this poem to typify men and women of earthly mold, ourselves. The Olympians, on a higher plane, escape the pangs of human passion and mere earthly love by heaping gifts on those who have rejected their devotion. Emerson would point the contrast between ordinary human passion and love of a more ethereal nature. See his essay on *Love*.

[2] i. e., inexorably

Thou art better, and not worse."—
And the god, having given all,
Is freed forever from his thrall.

1843

EROS[1]

The sense of the world is short,—
Long and various the report,—
To love and be beloved;
Men and gods have not outlearned it;
And, how oft soe'er they've turned it,
'Tis not to be improved.

1844

EXPERIENCE

The lords of life, the lords of life,—
I saw them pass,
In their own guise,
Like and unlike,
Portly and grim,—
Use and Surprise,
Surface and Dream,
Succession swift, and spectral Wrong,
Temperament without a tongue,
And the inventor of the game
Omnipresent without name;—
Some to see, some to be guessed,
They march from east to west:
Little man, least of all,
Among the legs of his guardians tall,
Walked about with puzzled look.
Him by the hand dear Nature took,
Dearest Nature, strong and kind,
Whispered, "Darling never mind!
Tomorrow they will wear another face,
The founder thou; these are thy race!"

1844, 1867

FORERUNNERS

Long I followed happy guides,
I could never reach their sides;
Their step is forth, and, ere the day,
Breaks up their leaguer,[2] and away.
Keen my sense, my heart was young,
Right good-will my sinews strung,
But no speed of mine avails
To hunt upon their shining trails.
On and away, their hasting feet
Make the morning proud and sweet;
Flowers they strew,—I catch the scent;
Or tone of silver instrument
Leaves on the wind melodious trace;
Yet I could never see their face.
On eastern hills I see their smokes,
Mixed with mist by distant lochs.
I met many travelers
Who the road had surely kept;
They saw not my fine revelers,—
These had crossed them while they slept.
Some had heard their fair report,
In the country or the court.
Fleetest couriers alive
Never yet could once arrive,
As they went or they returned,
At the house where these sojourned.
Sometimes their strong speed they slacken,
Though they are not overtaken;
In sleep their jubilant troop is near,—
I tuneful voices overhear;
It may be in wood or waste,—
At unawares 'tis come and past.
Their near camp my spirit knows
By signs gracious as rainbows.
I thenceforward, and long after,
Listen for their harp-like laughter,
And carry in my heart, for days,
Peace that hallows rudest ways.

1846

FABLE

The mountain and the squirrel
Had a quarrel;
And the former called the latter "Little Prig;"
Bun replied,
"You are doubtless very big;
But all sorts of things and weather
Must be taken in together,
To make up a year
And a sphere.
And I think it no disgrace
To occupy my place.
If I'm not so large as you,
You are not so small as I,
And not half so spry.
I'll not deny you make
A very pretty squirrel track;
Talents differ; all is well and wisely put;
If I cannot carry forests on my back,
Neither can you crack a nut."

1846

MITHRIDATES[1]

I cannot spare water or wine,
Tobacco-leaf, or poppy, or rose;
From the earth-poles to the line,
All between that works or grows,
Everything is kin of mine.

---

[1] God of love.
[2] camp

[1] Mithridates, 132-63 B. C., the great conqueror, was King of Pontus, a country on the southeastern coast of the Black Sea. He was versatile, savage, eager for new experiences. He was said so to have filled his system with poisons, by magic, as to be immune to them.

Give me agates for my meat;
Give me cantharids[2] to eat;
From air and ocean bring me foods,
From all zones and altitudes;—

From all natures, sharp and slimy,
  Salt and basalt, wild and tame:
Tree and lichen, ape, sea-lion,
  Bird, and reptile, be my game.

Ivy for my fillet band;
Blinding dog-wood in my hand;
Hemlock for my sherbet cull me,
And the prussic juice to lull me;
Swing me in the upas[3] boughs,
Vampyre-fanned, when I carouse.

Too long shut in strait and few,
Thinly dieted on dew,
I will use the world, and sift it,
To a thousand humors shift it,
As you spin a cherry.
O doleful ghosts, and goblins merry!
O all you virtues, methods, mights,
Means, appliances, delights,
Reputed wrongs and braggart rights,
Smug routine, and things allowed,
Minorities, things under cloud!
Hither! take me, use me, fill me,
Vein and artery, though ye kill me;
God! I will not be an owl,
But sun me in the Capitol.

1847

ASTRÆA[1]

Each the herald is who wrote
His rank, and quartered[2] his own coat.
There is no king nor sovereign state
That can fix a hero's rate;
Each to all is venerable,
Cap-a-pie invulnerable,
Until he write, where all eyes rest,
Slave or master on his breast.

I saw men go up and down,
In the country and the town,
With this tablet on their neck,—
"Judgment and a judge we seek."
Not to monarchs they repair,
Nor to learned jurist's chair;
But they hurry to their peers,
To their kinsfolk and their dears;
Louder than with speech they pray,—
"What am I? companion, say."
And the friend not hesitates
To assign just place and mates;
Answers not in word or letter,
Yet is understood the better;
Each to each a looking-glass,
Reflects his figure that doth pass.
Every wayfarer he meets
What himself declared repeats,
What himself confessed records,
Sentences him in his words;
The form is his own corporal form,
And his thought the penal worm.

Yet shine forever virgin minds,
Loved by stars and purest winds,
Which, o'er passion throned sedate,
Have not hazarded their state;
Disconcert the searching spy,
Rendering to a curious eye
The durance of a granite ledge
To those who gaze from the sea's edge.
It is there for benefit;
It is there for purging light;
There for purifying storms;
And its depths reflect all forms;
It cannot parley with the mean,—
Pure by impure is not seen.
For there's no sequestered grot,
Lone mountain tarn,[3] or isle forgot,
But Justice, journeying in the sphere,
Daily stoops to harbor there.

1847

GIVE ALL TO LOVE

Give all to love;
Obey thy heart;
Friends, kindred, days,
Estate, good-fame,
Plans, credit, and the Muse,—
Nothing refuse.

'Tis a brave master;
Let it have scope:
Follow it utterly,
Hope beyond hope:
High and more high
It dives into noon,
With wing unspent,
Untold intent;
But it is a god,
Knows its own path,
And the outlets of the sky.

It was not for the mean;
It requireth courage stout,
Souls above doubt,
Valor unbending;

---

[2] A kind of poisonous beetle.
[3] A poisonous tree.
[1] The Greek goddess of justice.
[2] Added an heraldic sign to a coat of arms; hence, settled his own rank.
[3] lake

Such 'twill reward,—
They shall return
More than they were,
And ever ascending.

Leave all for love;
Yet, hear me, yet,
One word more thy heart behoved,
One pulse more of firm endeavor,—
Keep thee today,
Tomorrow, forever,
Free as an Arab
Of thy beloved.

Cling with life to the maid;
But when the surprise,
First vague shadow of surmise
Flits across her bosom young
Of a joy apart from thee,
Free be she, fancy-free;
Nor thou detain her vesture's hem,
Nor the palest rose she flung
From her summer diadem.

Though thou loved her as thyself,
As a self of purer clay,
Though her parting dims the day,
Stealing grace from all alive;
Heartily know,
When half-gods go,
The gods arrive.

1847

MERLIN[1]

I

Thy trivial harp will never please
Or fill my craving ear;
Its chords should ring as blows the breeze,
Free, peremptory, clear.
No jingling serenader's art,
Nor tinkle of piano strings,
Can make the wild blood start
In its mystic springs.
The kingly bard
Must smite the chords rudely and hard,
As with hammer or with mace;
That they may render back
Artful thunder, which conveys
Secrets of the solar track,
Sparks of the supersolar blaze.
Merlin's blows are strokes of fate,
Chiming with the forest tone,
When boughs buffet boughs in the wood;
Chiming with the gasp and moan
Of the ice-imprisoned flood;
With the pulse of manly hearts;
With the voice of orators;
With the din of city arts;
With the cannonade of wars;
With the marches of the brave;
And prayers of might from martyrs' cave.

Great is the art,
Great be the manners, of the bard.
He shall not his brain encumber
With the coil of rhythm and number;
But, leaving rule and pale forethought,
He shall aye climb
For his rime.
"Pass in, pass in," the angels say,
"In to the upper doors,
Nor count compartments of the floors.
But mount to paradise
By the stairway of surprise."

Blameless master of the games,
King of sport that never shames,
He shall daily joy dispense
Hid in song's sweet influence.
Things more cheerly live and go,
What time the subtle mind
Sings aloud the tune whereto
Their pulses beat,
And march their feet,
And their members are combined.

By Sybarites[2] beguiled,
He shall no task decline;
Merlin's mighty line
Extremes of nature reconciled,—
Bereaved a tyrant of his will,
And made the lion mild.
Songs can the tempest still,
Scattered on the stormy air,
Mold the year to fair increase
And bring in poetic peace.

He shall not seek to weave,
In weak, unhappy times,
Efficacious rimes;
Wait his returning strength.
Bird, that from the nadir's[3] floor
To the zenith's top can soar,
The soaring orbit of the muse exceeds that journey's length.
Nor profane affect to hit
Or compass that, by meddling wit,
Which only the propitious mind
Publishes when 'tis inclined.

---

[1] A half-legendary poet of perhaps the sixth century. The name is also that of the great magician of the Arthurian legends.

[2] The inhabitants of the city of Sybaris, an ancient city of southern Italy, were known for their great luxury.

[3] The point just opposite the zenith or directly below our feet.

There are open hours
When the God's will sallies free,
And the dull idiot might see
The flowing fortunes of a thousand years;—
Sudden, at unawares,
Self-moved, fly-to the doors,
Nor sword of angels could reveal
What they conceal.

1847

II

The rime of the poet
Modulates the king's affairs;
Balance-loving Nature
Made all things in pairs.
To every foot its antipode;
Each color with its counter glowed;
To every tone beat answering tones,
Higher or graver;
Flavor gladly blends with flavor;
Leaf answers leaf upon the bough;
And match the paired cotyledons.
Hands to hands, and feet to feet,
In one body grooms and brides;
Eldest rite, two married sides
In every mortal meet.
Light's far furnace shines,
Smelting balls and bars,
Forging double stars,
Glittering twins and trines.
The animals are sick with love,
Lovesick with rime;
Each with all propitious time
Into chorus wove.

Like the dancers' ordered band,
Thoughts come also hand in hand;
In equal couples mated,
Or else alternated;
Adding by their mutual gage,
One to other, health and age.
Solitary fancies go
Short-lived wandering to and fro,
Most like to bachelors,
Or an ungiven maid,
Not ancestors,
With no posterity to make the lie afraid,
Or keep truth undecayed.
Perfect-paired as eagle's wings,
Justice is the rime of things;
Trade and counting use
The self-same tuneful muse;
And Nemesis,[4]
Who with even matches odd,
Who athwart space redresses
The partial wrong,
Fills the just period,
And finishes the song.

Subtle rimes, with ruin rife,
Murmur in the house of life,
Sung by the Sisters[5] as they spin;
In perfect time and measure they
Build and unbuild our echoing clay,
As the two twilights of the day
Fold us music-drunken in.

1847

THRENODY[1]

The South-wind brings
Life, sunshine, and desire,
And on every mount and meadow
Breathes aromatic fire;
But over the dead he has no power,
The lost, the lost, he cannot restore;
And, looking over the hills, I mourn
The darling who shall not return.

I see my empty house,
I see my trees repair their boughs;
And he, the wondrous child,
Whose silver warble wild
Outvalued every pulsing sound
Within the air's cerulean round,—
The hyacinthine boy, for whom
Morn well might break and April bloom,—
The gracious boy, who did adorn
The world whereinto he was born,
And by his countenance repay
The favor of the loving Day,—
Has disappeared from the Day's eye;
Far and wide she cannot find him;
My hopes pursue, they cannot bind him.
Returned this day, the south wind searches,
And finds young pines and budding birches;
But finds not the budding man;
Nature, who lost, cannot remake him;
Fate let him fall, Fate can't retake him;
Nature, Fate, men, him seek in vain.

And whither now, my truant wise and sweet,
O, whither tend thy feet?
I had the right, few days ago,
Thy steps to watch, thy place to know;
How have I forfeited the right?
Hast thou forgot me in a new delight?

---

[4] goddess of retribution, and allotter of divine justice

[5] The Fates, who spin, weave, and cut the thread of human life.

[1] From θρῆνος, *wailing*, and ᾠδή, *song*. The poem was written in 1842, just after the death of Emerson's oldest son Waldo, "a perfect little boy of five years and three months," as Emerson wrote Carlyle.

I hearken for thy household cheer,
O eloquent child!
Whose voice, an equal messenger,
Conveyed thy meaning mild.
What though the pains and joys
Whereof it spoke were toys
Fitting his age and ken,
Yet fairest dames and bearded men,
Who heard the sweet request,
So gentle, wise, and grave,
Bended with joy to his behest,
And let the world's affairs go by,
Awhile to share his cordial game,
Or mend his wicker wagon-frame,
Still plotting how their hungry ear
That winsome voice again might hear;
For his lips could well pronounce
Words that were persuasions.

Gentlest guardians marked serene
His early hope, his liberal mien;
Took counsel from his guiding eyes
To make this wisdom earthly wise,
Ah, vainly do these eyes recall
The school-march, each day's festival,
When every morn my bosom glowed
To watch the convoy on the road;
The babe in willow wagon closed,
With rolling eyes and face composed;
With children forward and behind,
Like Cupids studiously inclined;
And he the chieftain paced beside,
The center of the troop allied,
With sunny face of sweet repose,
To guard the babe from fancied foes.
The little captain innocent
Took the eye with him as he went,
Each village senior paused to scan
And speak the lovely caravan.
From the window I look out
To mark thy beautiful parade,
Stately marching in cap and coat
To some tune by fairies played;—
A music heard by thee alone
To works as noble led thee on.

Now Love and Pride, alas! in vain,
Up and down their glances strain.
The painted sled stands where it stood;
The kennel by the corded wood;
The gathered sticks to stanch the wall
Of the snow-tower, when snow should fall;
The ominous hole he dug in the sand,
And childhood's castles built or planned;
His daily haunts I well discern,—
The poultry-yard, the shed, the barn,—
And every inch of garden ground
Paced by the blessed feet around,
From the roadside to the brook
Whereinto he loved to look.
Step the meek birds where erst they ranged;
The wintry garden lies unchanged;
The brook into the stream runs on;
But the deep-eyed boy is gone.

On that shaded day,
Dark with more clouds than tempests are,
When thou didst yield thy innocent breath
In birdlike heavings unto death,
Night came, and Nature had not thee;
I said, "We are mates in misery."
The morrow dawned with needless glow;
Each snowbird chirped, each fowl must crow;
Each tramper started; but the feet
Of the most beautiful and sweet
Of human youth had left the hill
And garden,—they were bound and still.
There's not a sparrow or a wren,
There's not a blade of autumn grain,
Which the four seasons do not tend,
And tides of life and increase lend;
And every chick of every bird,
And weed and rock-moss is preferred.
O ostrich-like forgetfulness!
O loss of larger in the less!
Was there no star that could be sent,
No watcher in the firmament,
No angel from the countless host
That loiters round the crystal coast,
Could stoop to heal that only child,
Nature's sweet marvel undefiled,
And keep the blossom of the earth,
Which all her harvests were not worth?
Not mine,—I never called thee mine,
But Nature's heir,—if I repine,
And seeing rashly torn and moved
Not what I made, but what I loved,
Grow early old with grief that thou
Must to the wastes of Nature go,—
'T is because a general hope
Was quenched, and all must doubt and grope.
For flattering planets seemed to say
This child should ills of ages stay,
By wondrous tongue, and guided pen,
Bring the flown Muses back to men.
Perchance not he but Nature ailed,
The world and not the infant failed.
It was not ripe yet to sustain
A genius of so fine a strain,
Who gazed upon the sun and moon
As if he came unto his own,
And, pregnant with his grander thought,
Brought the old order into doubt.
His beauty once their beauty tried;
They could not feed him, and he died.

And wandered backward as in scorn,
To wait an æon to be born.
Ill day which made this beauty waste,
Plight broken, this high face defaced!
Some went and came about the dead;
And some in books of solace read;
Some to their friends the tidings say;
Some went to write, some went to pray;
One tarried here, there hurried one;
But their heart abode with none.
Covetous death bereaved us all,
To aggrandize one funeral.
The eager fate which carried thee
Took the largest part of me:
For this losing is true dying;
This is lordly man's down-lying;
This his slow but sure reclining,
Star by star his world resigning.

O child of paradise,
Boy who made dear his father's home,
In whose deep eyes
Men read the welfare of the times to come,
I am too much bereft.
The world dishonored thou hast left.
O truth's and nature's costly lie!
O trusted broken prophecy!
O richest fortune sourly crossed!
Born for the future, to the future lost!
The deep Heart answered, "Weepest thou?
Worthier cause for passion wild
If I had not taken the child.
And deemest thou as those who pore,
With aged eyes, short way before,—
Think'st Beauty vanished from the coast
Of matter, and thy darling lost?
Taught he not thee—the man of eld,
Whose eyes within his eyes beheld
Heaven's numerous hierarchy span
The mystic gulf from God to man?
To be alone wilt thou begin
When worlds of lovers hem thee in?
Tomorrow, when the masks shall fall
That dizen Nature's carnival,
The pure shall see by their own will,
Which overflowing Love shall fill,
'T is not within the force of fate
The fate-conjoined to separate.
But thou, my votary, weepest thou?
I gave thee sight—where is it now?
I taught thy heart beyond the reach
Of ritual, bible, or of speech;
Wrote in thy mind's transparent table,
As far as the incommunicable;
Taught thee each private sign to raise
Lit by the supersolar blaze.
Past utterance, and past belief,
And past the blasphemy of grief,
The mysteries of Nature's heart;
And though no Muse can these impart,
Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,
And all is clear from east to west.

"I came to thee as to a friend;
Dearest, to thee I did not send
Tutors, but a joyful eye,
Innocence that matched the sky,
Lovely locks, a form of wonder,
Laughter rich as woodland thunder,
That thou mightst entertain apart
The richest flowering of all art:
And, as the great all-loving Day
Through smallest chambers takes its way,
That thou mightst break thy daily bread
With prophet, savior and head;
That thou mightst cherish for thine own
The riches of sweet Mary's Son,
Boy-Rabbi, Israel's paragon.
And thoughtest thou such guest
Would in thy hall take up his rest?
Would rushing life forget her laws,
Fate's glowing revolution pause?
High omens ask diviner guess;
Not to be conned to tediousness.
And know my higher gifts unbind
The zone that girds the incarnate mind.
When the scanty shores are full
With Thought's perilous, whirling pool;
When frail Nature can no more,
Then the Spirit strikes the hour:
My servant Death, with solving rite,
Pours finite into infinite.

Wilt thou freeze love's tidal flow,
Whose streams through nature circling go?
Nail the wild star to its track
On the half-climbed zodiac?
Light is light which radiates,
Blood is blood which circulates,
Life is life which generates,
And many-seeming life is one,—
Wilt thou transfix and make it none?
Its onward force too starkly pent
In figure, bone, and lineament?
Wilt thou, uncalled, interrogate,
Talker! the unreplying Fate?
Nor see the genius of the whole
Ascendant in the private soul,
Beckon it when to go and come,
Self-announced its hour of doom?
Fair the soul's recess and shrine,
Magic-built to last a season;
Masterpiece of love benign,
Fairer that expansive reason
Whose omen 't is, and sign.
Wilt thou not ope thy heart to know

What rainbows teach, and sunsets show?
Verdict which accumulates
From lengthening scroll of human fates,
Voice of earth to earth returned,
Prayers of saints that inly burned,—
Saying, *What is excellent,*
As God lives, is permanent;
Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain;
Heart's love will meet thee again.
Revere the Maker; fetch thine eye
Up to his style, and manners of the sky.
Not of adamant and gold
Built he heaven stark and cold;
No, but a nest of bending reeds,
Flowering grass and scented weeds;
Or like a traveler's fleeing tent,
Or bow above the tempest bent;
Built of tears and sacred flames,
And virtue reaching to its aims;
Built of furtherance and pursuing,
Not of spent deeds, but of doing.
Silent rushes the swift Lord
Through ruined systems still restored,
Broadsowing, bleak and void to bless,
Plants with worlds the wilderness;
Waters with tears of ancient sorrow
Apples of Eden ripe tomorrow.
House and tenant go to ground,
Lost in God, in Godhead found."

1842 1847

ODE

SUNG IN THE TOWN HALL, CONCORD, JULY 4, 1857

O tenderly the haughty day
Fills his blue urn with fire;
One morn is in the mighty heaven,
And one in our desire.

The cannon booms from town to town,
Our pulses are not less,
The joy-bells chime their tidings down,
Which children's voices bless.

For He that flung the broad blue fold
O'er-mantling land and sea,
One third part of the sky unrolled
For the banner of the free.

The men are ripe of Saxon kind
To build an equal state,—
To take the statute from the mind
And make of duty fate.

United States! the ages plead,—
Present and Past in under-song,—
Go put your creed into your deed,
Nor speak with double tongue.

For sea and land don't understand
Nor skies without a frown
See rights for which the one hand fights
By the other cloven down.

Be just at home; then write your scroll
Of honor o'er the sea,
And bid the broad Atlantic roll
A ferry of the free.

And henceforth there shall be no chain,
Save underneath the sea
The wires shall murmur through the main[1]
Sweet songs of liberty.

The conscious stars accord above,
The waters wild below,
And under, through the cable wove,
Her fiery errands go.

For He that worketh high and wise,
Nor pauses in his plan,
Will take the sun out of the skies
Ere freedom out of man.

1857 1867

THE ROMANY[2] GIRL

The sun goes down, and with him takes
The coarseness of my poor attire;
The fair moon mounts, and aye the flame
Of gypsy beauty blazes higher.

Pale northern girls! you scorn our race;
You captives of your air-tight halls,
Wear out in-doors your sickly days,
But leave us the horizon walls.

And if I take you, dames, to task,
And say it frankly without guile,
Then you are gypsies in a mask,
And I the lady all the while.

If, on the heath, below the moon,
I court and play with paler blood,
Me false to mine dare whisper none,—
One sallow horseman knows me good.

Go, keep your cheek's rose from the rain,
For teeth and hair with shopmen deal;
My swarthy tint is in the grain,
The rocks and forest know it real.

[1] Although submarine telegraphy had already been established between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, and the trans-Atlantic line had been projected, the laying of the great Atlantic cable was not completed until 1866.

[2] gypsy

The wild air bloweth in our lungs,
The keen stars twinkle in our eyes,
The birds gave us our wily tongues,
The panther in our dances flies.

You doubt we read the stars on high,
Nathless we read your fortunes true;
The stars may hide in the upper sky,
But without glass we fathom you.
1855 1857

BRAHMA[1]

If the red slayer think he slays,
  Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
  I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
  Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
  And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;
  When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
  And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
  And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
  Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.
1857 1857

WORSHIP

This is he, who, felled by foes,
Sprung harmless up, refreshed by blows:
He to captivity was sold,
But him no prison-bars would hold:
Though they sealed him in a rock,
Mountain chains he can unlock:
Thrown to lions for their meat,
The crouching lion kissed his feet:
Bound to the stake, no flames appalled,
But arched o'er him an honoring vault.
This is he men miscall Fate,
Threading dark ways, arriving late,
But ever coming in time to crown
The truth, and hurl wrong-doers down.
He is the oldest, and best known,
More near than aught thou call'st thy own,
Yet, greeted in another's eyes,
Disconcerts with glad surprise.
This is Jove, who, deaf to prayers,
Floods with blessings unawares.
Draw, if thou canst, the mystic line
Severing rightly his from thine,
Which is human, which divine.
1859-1860 1860

BOSTON HYMN

READ IN MUSIC HALL, JANUARY 1, 1863

The word of the Lord by night
To the watching Pilgrims came,
As they sat by the seaside,
And filled their hearts with flame.

God said, I am tired of kings,
I suffer them no more;
Up to my ear the morning brings
The outrage of the poor.

Think ye I made this ball
A field of havoc and war,
Where tyrants great and tyrants small
Might harry the weak and poor?

My angel, his name is Freedom,—
Choose him to be your king;
He shall cut pathways east and west,
And fend you with his wing.

---

[1] Brahma was the personal god of the Hindoos, "the original source and ultimate goal of all that exists." Oscar W. Firkins, of the University of Minnesota, author of *Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Houghton, Mifflin & Company, 1915), has kindly furnished the following interpretation of the poem:

"In the poem Brahma stands for the cosmic force which is the ultimatum of science, and which in Emerson's mind was identical with the divine spirit, the spirit of truth, goodness, and beauty, the ultimatum of religion. As Brahma, this force is here viewed with special reference to its unending and manifold transformations. When a man is slain, his body and soul survive in new combinations, and the slaying is imaginary, however real it may appear to the slayer or the victim. The second stanza declares that past and present, good and evil, are alike expressions of this force, and that it preserves and reshapes the nucleus of truth in extinct religions. The third stanza teaches that this force is not only active in outworn paganisms, but is present in the skepticism or denial of our own time. All doubt is resolvable into thought or emotion, and thought and emotion simply tap the eternal reservoirs. In the fourth stanza, "abode" means not "dwelling," but "stay" or "continuance." The strong gods wish Brahma to stay with them, i. e., the old religions wish to confine, and monopolize the truth. The sacred Seven is probably a reference to the seven planets which rise and pass in an unstable world, with possibly a further allusion to the decadence of the Roman divinities, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, etc., whose names they bear. The meek lover of the good may turn his back on heaven; that is, the man who worships deity in spirit and in truth can dispense with the conventional rewards of traditional religion."

Lo! I uncover the land
Which I hid of old time in the West,
As the sculptor uncovers the statue
When he has wrought his best;

I show Columbia, of the rocks
Which dip their foot in the seas,
And soar to the air-borne flocks
Of clouds, and the boreal fleece.

I will divide my goods;
Call in the wretch and slave:
None shall rule but the humble,
And none but Toil shall have.

I will have never a noble,
No lineage counted great;
Fishers and choppers and plowmen
Shall constitute a state.

Go, cut down trees in the forest,
And trim the straightest boughs;
Cut down the trees in the forest,
And build me a wooden house.

Call the people together,
The young men and the sires,
The digger in the harvest field,
Hireling, and him that hires;

And here in a pine state-house
They shall choose men to rule
In every needful faculty,
In church, and state, and school.

Lo, now! if these poor men
Can govern the land and sea,
And make just laws below the sun,
As planets faithful be.

And ye shall succour men;
'T is nobleness to serve;
Help them who cannot help again:
Beware from right to swerve.

I break your bonds and masterships,
And I unchain the slave:
Free be his heart and hand henceforth
As wind and wandering wave.

I cause from every creature
His proper good to flow:
As much as he is and doeth,
So much he shall bestow.

But laying hands on another
To coin his labor and sweat,
He goes in pawn to his victim
For eternal years in debt.

Today unbind the captive
So only are ye unbound;
Lift up a people from the dust,
Trump of their rescue, sound!

Pay ransom to the owner,
And fill the bag to the brim.
Who is the owner? The slave is owner,
And ever was. Pay him.

O North! give him beauty for rags,
And honor, O South! for his shame;
Nevada! coin thy golden crags
With Freedom's image and name.[1]

Up! and the dusky race
That sat in darkness long,—
Be swift their feet as antelopes,
And as behemoth[2] strong.

Come, East and West and North,
By races, as snow-flakes,
And carry my purpose forth,
Which neither halts nor shakes.

My will fulfilled shall be,
For, in daylight or in dark,
My thunderbolt has eyes to see
His way home to the mark.

1863

VOLUNTARIES

I

Low and mournful be the strain,
Haughty thought be far from me;
Tones of penitence and pain,

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[1] Nevada was admitted in 1864 chiefly to add one more loyal state to the Union.

[2] An animal described in *Job* xl. 15-24; possibly the hippopotamus.

Moanings of the tropic sea;
Low and tender in the cell
Where a captive sits in chains,
Crooning ditties treasured well
From his Afric's torrid plains.
Sole estate his sire bequeathed—
Hapless sire to hapless son—
Was the wailing song he breathed,
And his chain when life was done.
What his fault, or what his crime?
Or what ill planet crossed his prime?
Heart too soft and will too weak
To front the fate that crouches near,—
Dove beneath the vulture's beak;—
Will song dissuade the thirsty spear?
Dragged from his mother's arms and breast,
Displaced, disfurnished here,
His wistful toil to do his best
Chilled by a ribald jeer,
Great men in the Senate sate,
Sage and hero, side by side,
Building for their sons the State,
Which they shall rule with pride.
They forbore to break the chain
Which bound the dusky tribe,
Checked by the owners' fierce disdain,
Lured by "Union" as the bribe.
Destiny sat by, and said,
"Pang for pang your seed shall pay,
Hide in false peace your coward head,
I bring round the harvest-day."

II

Freedom all winged expands,
Nor perches in a narrow place;
Her broad van seeks unplanted lands;
She loves a poor and virtuous race.
Clinging to a colder zone
Whose dark sky sheds the snow-flake down,
The snow-flake is her banner's star,
Her stripes the boreal streamers are.
Long she loved the Northman well:
Now the iron age is done,
She will not refuse to dwell
With the offspring of the Sun;
Foundling of the desert far,
Where palms plume, siroccos blaze,
He roves unhurt the burning ways
In climates of the summer star.
He has avenues to God
Hid from men of Northern brain,
Far beholding, without cloud,
What these with slowest steps attain
If once the generous chief arrive
To lead him willing to be led,
For freedom he will strike and strive,
And drain his heart till he be dead.

III

In an age of fops and toys,
Wanting wisdom, void of right,
Who shall nerve heroic boys
To hazard all in Freedom's fight,—
Break sharply off their jolly games,
Forsake their comrades gay,
And quit proud homes and youthful dames
For famine, toil, and fray?
Yet on the nimble air benign
Speed nimbler messages,
That waft the breath of grace divine
To hearts in sloth and ease.
So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, *Thou must,*
The youth replies, *I can.*

IV

O, well for the fortunate soul
Which Music's wings infold,
Stealing away the memory
Of sorrows new and old!
Yet happier he whose inward sight,
Stayed on his subtile thought,
Shuts his sense on toys of time,
To vacant bosoms brought.
But best befriended of the God
He who, in evil times,
Warned by an inward voice,
Heeds not the darkness and the dread,
Biding by his rule and choice,
Feeling only the fiery thread
Leading over heroic ground,
Walled with mortal terror round,
To the aim which him allures,
And the sweet heaven his deed secures.

Stainless soldier on the walls,
Knowing this,—and knows no more,—
Whoever fights, whoever falls,
Justice conquers evermore,
Justice after as before,—
And he who battles on her side,
God, though he were ten times slain,
Crowns him victor glorified,
Victor over death and pain;
Forever: but his erring foe,
Self-assured that he prevails,
Looks from his victim lying low,
And sees aloft the red right arm
Redress the eternal scales.
He, the poor foe, whom angels foil,
Blind with pride, and fooled by hate,

Writhes within the dragon coil,
Reserved to a speechless fate.

V

Blooms the laurel which belongs
To the valiant chief who fights;
I see the wreath, I hear the songs
Lauding the Eternal Rights,
Victors over daily wrongs:
Awful victors, they misguide
Whom they will destroy,
And their coming triumph hide
In our downfall, or our joy:
They reach no term, they never sleep,
In equal strength through space abide;
Though, feigning dwarfs, they crouch and
creep,
The strong they slay, the swift outstride:
Fate's grass grows rank in valley clods,
And rankly on the castled steep,—
Speak it firmly, these are gods,
All are ghosts beside.

1863

LETTERS

Every day brings a ship,
Every ship brings a word;
Well for those who have no fear,
Looking seaward well assured
That the word the vessel brings
Is the word they wish to hear.

1867

THE PAST

The debt is paid,
The verdict said,
The Furies[1] laid,
The plague is stayed,
All fortunes made;
Turn the key and bolt the door,
Sweet is death forevermore.
Nor haughty hope, nor swart chagrin,
Nor murdering hate, can enter in.
All is now secure and fast;
Not the gods can shake the Past;
Flies-to the adamantine door
Bolted down forevermore.
None can re-enter there,—
No thief so politic,
No Satan with a royal trick
Steal in by window, chink, or hole,
To bind or unbind, add what lacked,
Insert a leaf, or forge a name,
New-face or finish what is packed,
Alter or mend eternal Fact.

1867

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Born, Concord, Massachusetts, 1817, died there, 1862. Thoreau was of combined New England and French ancestry, graduated at Harvard, 1837, returned to Concord, lived for a while with Emerson, and intermittently taught school, surveyed, or worked at lead-pencil making, carpentry, or other day-labor, long enough to meet the necessities of his simple life. He expressed his independent mind in social and ethical essays, and strongly upheld the cause of anti-slavery. His chief delight was in the first-hand study of nature. Foremost among his works are *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers*, 1849; *Walden*, 1854; *Excursions*, 1863; *The Maine Woods*, 1864; *Cape Cod*, 1865.

From WALDEN[1]

From I. Economy

When I wrote the following pages, or rather the bulk of them, I lived alone, in the woods, a mile from any neighbor, in a house which I had built myself, on the shore of Walden Pond, in Concord, Massachusetts, and earned my living by the labor of my hands only. I lived there two years and two months. At present I am a sojourner in civilized life again.

I should not obtrude my affairs so much on the notice of my readers if very particular inquiries had not been made by my townsmen concerning my mode of life, which some would call impertinent, though they do not appear to me at all impertinent, but, considering the circumstances, very natural and pertinent. Some have asked what I got to eat; if I did not feel lonesome; if I was not afraid; and the like. Others have been curious to learn what portion of my income I devoted to charitable purposes; and some, who have large families, how many poor children I maintained. I will therefore ask those of my readers who feel no particular interest in me to pardon me if I undertake to answer some of these questions in this book. In most books, the *I*, or first person, is omitted; in this it will be retained; that, in respect to egotism, is the main difference.

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[1] The Eumenides, female divinities and the avengers of iniquity.

[1] Thoreau, one of the first Americans to write of the "simple life," gave us in *Walden* a narrative of the two years, 1845-1847, that he spent on the shores of Walden Pond, a small lake one and one-half miles south of Concord, Massachusetts. Here, although within easy reach of his friends and neighbors, he was sufficiently alone to study and write without interruption. Doubtless he also enjoyed proving that a man could support himself for a year by working only six weeks.

We commonly do not remember that it is, after all, always the first person that is speaking. I should not talk so much about myself if there were anybody else whom I knew as well. Unfortunately, I am confined to this theme by the narrowness of my experience. Moreover, I, on my side, require of every writer, first or last, a simple and sincere account of his own life, and not merely what he has heard of other men's lives; some such account as he would send to his kindred from a distant land; for if he has lived sincerely, it must have been in a distant land to me. Perhaps these pages are more particularly addressed to poor students. As for the rest of my readers, they will accept such portions as apply to them. I trust that none will stretch the seams in putting on the coat, for it may do good service to him whom it fits.

I would fain say something, not so much concerning the Chinese and Sandwich Islanders, as you who read these pages, who are said to live in New England; something about your condition, especially your outward condition or circumstances in this world, in this town, what it is, whether it is necessary that it be as bad as it is, whether it cannot be improved as well as not. I have traveled a good deal in Concord; and everywhere, in shops, and offices, and fields, the inhabitants have appeared to me to be doing penance in a thousand remarkable ways. What I have heard of Brahmans sitting exposed to four fires and looking in the face of the sun; or hanging suspended, with their heads downward, over flames; or looking at the heavens over their shoulders "until it becomes impossible for them to resume their natural position, while from the twist of the neck nothing but liquids can pass into the stomach"; or dwelling, chained for life, at the foot of a tree; or measuring with their bodies, like caterpillars, the breadth of vast empires; or standing on one leg on the tops of pillars,—even these forms of conscious penance are hardly more incredible and astonishing than the scenes which I daily witness. The twelve labors of Hercules[2] were trifling in comparison with those which my neighbors have undertaken; for they were only twelve, and had an end; but I could never see that these men slew or captured any monster or finished any labor. They have no friend Iolas[3] to burn with a hot iron the root of the hydra's head, but as soon as one head is crushed, two spring up.

I see young men, my townsmen, whose misfortune it is to have inherited farms, houses, barns, cattle, and farming tools; for these are more easily acquired than got rid of. Better if they had been born in the open pasture and suckled by a wolf, that they might have seen with clearer eyes what field they were called to labor in. Who made them serfs of the soil? Why should they eat their sixty acres, when man is condemned to eat only his peck of dirt? Why should they begin digging their graves as soon as they are born? They have got to live a man's life, pushing all these things before them, and get on as well as they can. How many a poor immortal soul have I met well nigh crushed and smothered under its load, creeping down the road of life, pushing before it a barn seventy-five feet by forty, its Augean stables[4] never cleansed, and one hundred acres of land tillage, mowing, pasture, and wood-lot! The portionless, who struggle with no such unnecessary inherited encumbrances, find it labor enough to subdue and cultivate a few cubic feet of flesh.

. . . .

Near the end of March, 1845, I borrowed an axe and went down to the woods by Walden Pond, nearest to where I intended to build my house, and began to cut down some tall arrowy white pines, still in their youth, for timber. It is difficult to begin without borrowing, but perhaps it is the most generous course thus to permit your fellow-men to have an interest in your enterprise. The owner of the axe, as he released his hold on it, said that it was the apple of his eye; but I returned it sharper than I received it. It was a pleasant hillside where I worked, covered with pine woods, through which I looked out on the pond, and a small open field in the woods where pines and hickories were springing up. The ice in the pond was not yet dissolved, though there were some open spaces, and it was all dark colored and saturated with water. There were some slight flurries of snow during the days that I worked there; but for the most part when I came out on to the railroad, on my way home, its yellow sand heap stretched away gleaming in the hazy atmosphere, and the rails shone in the spring sun, and I heard the lark and pewee and other birds already come to commence another year with us. They were pleasant spring days, in which the winter of man's discontent[5] was thawing as well as the earth, and the life that had lain torpid began to stretch itself. One day, when my axe had come off and I had cut a green hickory for a wedge, driving it with a stone, and had placed the whole to soak in a pond hole in order to swell the wood, I saw a striped snake run into the water, and he lay on the bottom, apparently without inconvenience, as long as I stayed there, or more than a quarter of an hour; perhaps because he had not yet fairly come out of the torpid state. It appeared to me that for a like reason men remain in their present low and primitive condition; but if they should feel the influence of the spring of springs arousing them, they would of necessity rise to a higher and more ethereal life. I had previously seen the snakes in frosty mornings in my path with portions of their bodies still numb and inflexible, waiting for the sun to thaw them. On the 1st of April it rained and melted the ice, and in the early part of the day, which was very foggy, I heard a stray goose groping about over the pond and cackling as if lost, or like the spirit of the fog.

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[2] Hercules, to obtain immortality, had to perform twelve great tasks; he cleansed the Augean stables, strangled the Nemean lion, killed the Lernean hydra, procured the golden apples from the Hesperides, brought to earth Cerberus, the dog that guarded Hades, and did other superhuman deeds.

[3] The companion and charioteer of Hercules, without whose help the hydra might scarcely have been overcome.

[4] Hercules cleansed the stables of Augeas, in which three thousand oxen had been stabled for thirty years, in one day by turning the rivers Alpheus and Peneus through them.

So I went on for some days cutting and hewing timber, and also studs and rafters, all with my narrow axe, not having many communicable or scholar-like thoughts, singing to myself,—

> Men say they know many things;
> But lo! they have taken wings,—
> The arts and sciences,
> And a thousand appliances;
> The wind that blows
> Is all that anybody knows.

I hewed the main timbers six inches square, most of the studs on two sides only, and the rafters and floor timbers on one side, leaving the rest of the bark on, so that they were just as straight and much stronger than sawed ones. Each stick was carefully mortised or tenoned by its stump, for I had borrowed other tools by this time. My days in the woods were not very long ones; yet I usually carried my dinner of bread and butter, and read the newspaper in which it was wrapped, at noon, sitting amid the green pine boughs which I had cut off, and to my bread was imparted some of their fragrance, for my hands were covered with a thick coat of pitch. Before I had done I was more the friend than the foe of the pine tree, though I had cut down some of them, having become better acquainted with it. Sometimes a rambler in the wood was attracted by the sound of my axe, and we chatted pleasantly over the chips which I had made.

By the middle of April, for I made no haste in my work, but rather made the most of it, my house was framed and ready for the raising. I had already bought the shanty of James Collins, an Irishman who worked on the Fitchburg Railroad, for boards. James Collins' shanty was considered an uncommonly fine one. When I called to see it he was not at home. I walked about the outside, at first unobserved from within, the window was so deep and high. It was of small dimensions, with a peaked cottage roof, and not much else to be seen, the dirt being raised five feet all around as if it were a compost heap. The roof was the soundest part, though a good deal warped and made brittle by the sun. Door-sill there was none, but a perennial passage for the hens under the door board. Mrs. C. came to the door and asked me to view it from the inside. The hens were driven in by my approach. It was dark, and had a dirt floor for the most part, dank, clammy, and aguish, only here a board and there a board which would not bear removal. She lighted a lamp to show me the inside of the roof and the walls, and also that the board floor extended under the bed, warning me not to step into the cellar, a sort of dust hole two feet deep. In her own words, they were "good boards overhead, good boards all around, and a good window,"—of two whole squares originally, only the cat had passed out that way lately. There was a stove, a bed, and a place to sit, an infant in the house where it was born, a silk parasol, gilt-framed looking-glass, and a patent new coffeemill nailed to an oak sapling, all told. The bargain was soon concluded, for James had in the mean while returned. I to pay four dollars and twenty-five cents tonight, he to vacate at five tomorrow morning, selling to nobody else meanwhile: I to take possession at six. It were well, he said, to be there early, and anticipate certain indistinct but wholly unjust claims on the score of ground rent and fuel. This he assured me was the only encumbrance. At six I passed him and his family on the road. One large bundle held their all,—bed, coffeemill, looking-glass, hens,—all but the cat; she took to the woods and became a wild cat, and, as I learned afterward, trod in a trap set for woodchucks, and so became a dead cat at last.

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[5] Cf. *Richard III*, I. i. 1, 2.

I took down this dwelling the same morning, drawing the nails, and removed it to the pond side by small cart-loads, spreading the boards on the grass there to bleach and warp back again in the sun. One early thrush gave me a note or two as I drove along the woodland path. I was informed treacherously by a young Patrick that neighbor Seeley, an Irishman, in the intervals of the carting, transferred the still tolerable straight, and drivable nails, staples, and spikes to his pocket, and then stood when I came back to pass the time of day, and look freshly up, unconcerned, with spring thoughts, at the devastation; there being a dearth of work, as he said. He was there to represent spectatordom, and help make this seemingly insignificant event one with the removal of the gods of Troy.[6]

I dug my cellar in the side of a hill sloping to the south, where a woodchuck had formerly dug his burrow, down through sumach and blackberry roots, and the lowest stain of vegetation, six feet square by seven deep, to a fine sand where potatoes would not freeze in any winter. The sides were left shelving, and not stoned; but the sun having never shone on them, the sand still keeps its place. It was but two hours' work. I took particular pleasure in this breaking of ground, for in almost all latitudes men dig into the earth for an equable temperature. Under the most splendid house in the city is still to be found the cellar where they store their roots as of old, and long after the superstructure has disappeared posterity remark its dent in the earth. The house is still but a sort of porch at the entrance of a burrow.

At length, in the beginning of May, with the help of some of my acquaintances,[7] rather to improve so good an occasion for neighborliness than from any necessity, I set up the frame of my house. No man was ever more honored in the character of his raisers than I. They are destined, I trust, to assist at the raising of loftier structures one day. I began to occupy my house on the 4th of July, as soon as it was boarded and roofed, for the boards were carefully feather-edged and lapped, so that it was perfectly impervious to rain; but before boarding I laid the foundation of a chimney at one end, bringing two cartloads of stones up the hill from the pond in my arms. I built the chimney after my hoeing in the fall, before a fire became necessary for warmth, doing my cooking in the mean while out of doors on the ground, early in the morning: which mode I still think is in some respects more convenient and agreeable than the usual one. When it stormed before my bread was baked, I fixed a few boards over the fire, and sat under them to watch my loaf, and passed some pleasant hours in that way. In those days, when my hands were much employed, I read but little, but the least scraps of paper which lay on the ground, my holder, or tablecloth, afforded me as much entertainment, in fact answered the same purpose as the Iliad.

. . . .

Before winter I built a chimney, and shingled the sides of my house, which were already impervious to rain, with imperfect and sappy shingles made of the first slice of the log, whose edges I was obliged to straighten with a plane.

I have thus a tight shingled and plastered house, ten feet wide by fifteen long, and eight-feet posts, with a garret and a closet, a large window on each side, two trap doors, one door at the end, and a brick fireplace opposite. The exact cost of my house, paying the usual price for such materials as I used, but not counting the work, all of which was done by myself, was as follows; and I give the details because very few are able to tell exactly what their houses cost, and fewer still, if any, the separate cost of the various materials which compose them:—

Boards	$8.03½,	mostly shanty boards.
Refuse shingles for roof and sides.........	4.00	
Laths	1.25	
Two second-hand windows with glass.........	2.43	
One thousand old brick.........	4.00	
Two casks of lime	2.40	That was high.
Hair...........	.31	More than I needed.
Mantle-tree iron.	.15	
Nails...........	3.90	

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[6] The spirit of Hector commanded Æneas to build a new city, Rome, to shelter the Lares and Penates—household gods—of fallen Troy. Virgil, *Æneid* ii. 248-311.

[7] These helpers included Emerson, Ellery Channing, Bronson Alcott, and George William Curtis, then a Harvard student of twenty-one who was working on a farm near by.

Hinges and screws	.14	
Latch	.10	
Chalk	.01	
Transportation	1.40	I carried a good part on my back.
In all	$28.12½	

These are all the materials excepting the timber, stones, and sand, which I claimed by squatter's right. I have also a small woodshed adjoining, made chiefly of the stuff which was left after building the house.

I intend to build me a house which will surpass any on the main street in Concord in grandeur and luxury, as soon as it pleases me as much and will cost me no more than my present one.

I thus found that the student who wishes for a shelter can obtain one for a lifetime at an expense not greater than the rent which he now pays annually. If I seem to boast more than is becoming, my excuse is that I brag for humanity rather than for myself; and my shortcomings and inconsistencies do not affect the truth of my statement. Notwithstanding much cant and hypocrisy,—chaff which I find it difficult to separate from my wheat, but for which I am as sorry as any man,—I will breathe freely and stretch myself in this respect, it is such a relief to both the moral and physical system; and I am resolved that I will not through humility become the devil's attorney. I will endeavor to speak a good word for the truth. At Cambridge College the mere rent of a student's room, which is only a little larger than my own, is thirty dollars each year, though the corporation had the advantage of building thirty-two side by side and under one roof, and the occupant suffers the inconvenience of many and noisy neighbors, and perhaps a residence in the fourth story. I cannot but think that if we had more true wisdom in these respects, not only less education would be needed, because, forsooth, more would already have been acquired, but the pecuniary expense of getting an education would in a great measure vanish. Those conveniences which the student requires at Cambridge or elsewhere cost him or somebody else ten times as great a sacrifice of life as they would with proper management on both sides. Those things for which the most money is demanded are never the things which the student most wants. Tuition, for instance, is an important item in the term bill, while for the far more valuable education which he gets by associating with the most cultivated of his contemporaries no charge is made. The mode of founding a college is, commonly, to get up a subscription of dollars and cents, and then following blindly the principles of a division of labor to its extreme, a principle which should never be followed but with circumspection,—to call in a contractor who makes this a subject of speculation, and he employs Irishmen or other operatives actually to lay the foundations, while the students that are to be are said to be fitting themselves for it; and for these oversights successive generations have to pay. I think that it would be *better than this,* for the students, or those who desire to be benefited by it, even to lay the foundation themselves. The student who secures his coveted leisure and retirement by systematically shirking any labor necessary to man obtains but an ignoble and unprofitable leisure, defrauding himself of the experience which alone can make leisure fruitful. "But," says one, "you do not mean that the students should go to work with their hands instead of their heads?" I do not mean that exactly, but I mean something which he might think a good deal like that; I mean that they should not *play* life, or *study* it merely, while the community supports them at this expensive game, but earnestly *live* it from beginning to end. How could youths better learn to live than by at once trying the experiment of living?[8] Methinks this would exercise their minds as much as mathematics. If I wished a boy to know something about the arts and sciences, for instance, I would not pursue the common course, which is merely to send him into the neighborhood of some professor, where anything is professed and practiced but the art of life;—to survey the world through a telescope or a microscope, and never with his natural eye; to study chemistry, and not learn how his bread is made, or mechanics, and not learn how it is earned; to discover new satellites to Neptune, and not detect the motes in his eyes, or to what vagabond he is a satellite himself; or to be devoured by the monsters that swarm all around him, while contemplating the monsters in a drop of vinegar. Which would have advanced the most at the end of a month,—the boy who had made his own jackknife from the ore which he had dug and smelted, reading as much as would be necessary for this,—or the boy who had attended the lectures on metallurgy at the Institute in the meanwhile, and had received a Rogers' penknife from his father? Which would be most likely to cut his fingers? . . . To my astonishment I was informed on leaving college that I had studied navigation!—why, if I had taken one turn down the harbor I should have known more about it. Even the *poor* student studies and is taught only *political* economy, while that economy of living which is synonymous with philosophy is not even sincerely professed in our colleges. The consequence is that while he is reading Adam Smith, Ricardo, and Say,[9] he runs his father in debt irretrievably.

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[8] This shows the seriousness of Thoreau's own experiment.

. . . .

Before I finished my house, wishing to earn ten or twelve dollars by some honest and agreeable method, in order to meet my unusual expenses, I planted about two acres and a half of light and sandy soil near it chiefly with beans, but also a small part with potatoes, corn, peas, and turnips. The whole lot contains eleven acres, mostly growing up to pines and hickories, and was sold the preceding season for eight dollars and eight cents an acre. One farmer said that it was "good for nothing but to raise cheeping squirrels on." I put no manure whatever on this land, not being the owner, but merely a squatter, and not expecting to cultivate so much again, and I did not quite hoe it all once. I got out several cords of stumps in plowing, which supplied me with fuel for a long time, and left small circles of virgin mold, easily distinguishable through the summer by the greater luxuriance of the beans there. The dead and for the most part unmerchantable wood behind my house, and the driftwood from the pond, have supplied the remainder of my fuel. I was obliged to hire a team and a man for the plowing, though I held the plow myself. My farm outgoes for the first season were, for implements, seed, work, etc., $14.72½. The seed corn was given me. This never costs anything to speak of, unless you plant more than enough. I got twelve bushels of beans, and eighteen bushels of potatoes, besides some peas and sweet corn. The yellow corn and turnips were too late to come to anything. My whole income from the farm was

	$23.44
Deducting the outgoes	14.72½
There are left	$ 8.71½

besides produce consumed and on hand at the time this estimate was made of the value of $4.50,—the amount on hand much more than balancing a little grass which I did not raise. All things considered, that is, considering the importance of a man's soul and of today, notwithstanding the short time occupied by my experiment, nay, partly even because of its transient character, I believe that that was doing better than any farmer in Concord did that year.

The next year I did better still, for I spaded up all the land which I required, about a third of an acre, and I learned from the experience of both years, not being in the least awed by many celebrated works on husbandry, Arthur Young[10] among the rest, that if one would live simply and eat only the crop which he raised, and raise no more than he ate, and not exchange it for an insufficient quantity of more luxurious and expensive things, he would need to cultivate only a few rods of ground, and that it would be cheaper to spade up that than to use oxen to plow it, and to select a fresh spot from time to time than to manure the old, and he could do all his necessary farm work as it were with his left hand at odd hours in the summer; and thus he would not be tied to an ox, or horse, or cow, or pig, as at present. I desire to speak impartially on this point, and as one not interested in the success or failure of the present economical and social arrangements. I was more independent than any farmer in Concord, for I was not anchored to a house or farm, but could follow the bent of my genius, which is a very crooked one, every moment. Besides being better off than they already, if my house had been burned or my crops had failed, I should have been nearly as well off as before.

. . . .

By surveying, carpentry, and day-labor of various other kinds in the village in the meanwhile, for I have as many trades as fingers, I had earned $13.34. The expense of food for eight months, namely, from July 4th to March 1st, the time when these estimates were made, though I lived there more than two years,—not counting potatoes, a little green corn, and some peas, which I had raised, nor considering the value of what was on hand at the last date, was

Rice	$1.73½	
Molasses	1.73	Cheapest form of the saccharine.
Rye meal	1.04¾	
Indian meal	.99¾	Cheaper than rye.

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[9] Economists, the first two English, the third French.

[10] A noted English writer on agriculture and social economy.

Pork	.22		All experiments which failed.
Flour	.88	Costs more than Indian meal, both money and trouble.	
Sugar	.80		
Lard	.65		
Apples	.25		
Dried apples	.22		
Sweet potatoes	.10		
One pumpkin	.06		
One watermelon	.02		
Salt	.03		

Yes, I did eat $8.74, all told; but I should not thus unblushingly publish my guilt, if I did not know that most of my readers were equally guilty with myself, and that their deeds would look no better in print. The next year I sometimes caught a mess of fish for my dinner, and once I went so far as to slaughter a woodchuck which ravaged my beanfield,—effect his transmigration, as a Tartar would say,—and devour him, partly for experiment's sake; but though it afforded me a momentary enjoyment, notwithstanding a musky flavor, I saw that the longest use would not make that a good practice, however it might seem to have your woodchucks ready dressed by the village butcher.

Clothing and some incidental expenses within the same dates, though little can be inferred from this item, amounted to	$8.40¾
Oil and some household utensils	2.00

So that all the pecuniary outgoes, excepting for washing and mending, which for the most part were done out of the house, and their bills have not yet been received,—and these are all and more than all the ways by which money necessarily goes out in this part of the world,—were

House	$28.12½
Farm, one year	14.72½
Food eight months	8.74
Clothing, etc., eight months	8.40¾
Oil, etc., eight months	2.00
In all	$61.99¾

I address myself now to those of my readers who have a living to get. And to meet this I have for farm produce sold

	$23.44
Earned by day-labor	13.34
In all	$36.78

which subtracted from the sum of the outgoes leaves a balance of $25.21¾ on the one side,—this being very nearly the means with which I started, and the measure of expenses to be incurred,—and on the other, besides the leisure and independence and health thus secured, a comfortable house for me as long as I choose to occupy it.

These statistics, however accidental and therefore uninstructive they may appear, as they have a certain completeness, have a certain value also. Nothing was given me of which I have not rendered some account. It appears from the above estimate, that my food alone cost me in money about twenty-seven cents a week. It was for nearly two years after this, rye and Indian meal, without yeast, potatoes, rice, a very little salt pork, molasses, and salt, and my drink, water. It was fit that I should live on rice, mainly, who loved so well the philosophy of India. To meet the objections of some inveterate cavilers, I may as well state that if I dined out occasionally, as I always had done, and I trust shall have opportunities to do again, it was frequently to the detriment of my domestic arrangements. But the dining out, being, as I have stated, a constant element, does not in the least effect a comparative statement like this.

I learned from my two years' experience that it would cost incredibly little trouble to obtain one's necessary food, even in this latitude; that a man may use as simple a diet as the animals, and yet retain health and strength.

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From II. Where I Lived and What I Lived For

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When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was on Independence day, or the fourth of July, 1845, my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defense against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night. The upright white hewn studs and freshly planed door and window casings gave it a clean and airy look, especially in the morning, when its timbers were saturated with dew, so that I fancied that by noon some sweet gum would exude from them. To my imagination it retained throughout the day more or less of this auroral character, reminding me of a certain house on a mountain which I had visited the year before. This was an airy and unplastered cabin, fit to entertain a traveling god, and where a goddess might trail her garments. The winds which passed over my dwelling were such as sweep over the ridges of mountains, bearing the broken strains, or celestial parts only, of terrestrial music. The morning wind forever blows, the poem of creation is uninterrupted; but few are the ears that hear it. Olympus is but the outside of the earth everywhere.

The only house I had been the owner of before, if I except a boat, was a tent, which I used occasionally when making excursions in the summer, and this is still rolled up in my garret; but the boat, after passing from hand to hand, has gone down the stream of time. With this more substantial shelter about me, I had made some progress toward settling in the world. This frame, so slightly clad, was a sort of crystallization around me, and reacted on the builder. It was suggestive somewhat as a picture in outlines. I did not need to go out doors to take the air, for the atmosphere within had lost none of its freshness. It was not so much within doors as behind a door where I sat, even in the rainiest weather. The Harivansa[11] says, "An abode without birds is like a meat without seasoning." Such was not my abode, for I found myself suddenly neighbor to the birds; not by having imprisoned one, but having caged myself near them. I was not only nearer to some of those which commonly frequent the garden and the orchard, but to those wilder and more thrilling songsters of the forest which never, or rarely, serenade a villager,—the wood-thrush, the veery, the scarlet tanager, the field-sparrow, the whippoorwill, and many others.

I was seated by the shore of a small pond, about a mile and a half south of the village of Concord and somewhat higher than it, in the midst of an extensive wood between that town and Lincoln, and about two miles south of that our only field known to fame, Concord Battle Ground; but I was so low in the woods that the opposite shore, half a mile off, like the rest, covered with wood, was my most distant horizon. For the first week, whenever I looked out on the pond it impressed me like a tarn high up on the side of a mountain, its bottom far above the surface of other lakes, and, as the sun arose, I saw it throwing off its nightly clothing of mist, and here and there, by degrees, its soft ripples or its smooth reflecting surface was revealed, while the mists, like ghosts, were stealthily withdrawing in every direction into the woods, as at the breaking up of some nocturnal conventicle. The very dew seemed to hang upon the trees later into the day than usual, as on the sides of mountains.

This small lake was of most value as a neighbor in the intervals of a gentle rain storm in August, when, both air and water being perfectly still, but the sky overcast, mid-afternoon had all the serenity of evening, and the wood-thrush sang around, and was heard from shore to shore. A lake like this is never smoother than at such a time; and the clear portion of the air above it being shallow and darkened by clouds, the water, full of light and reflections, becomes a lower heaven itself so much the more important. From a hill top near by, where the wood had been recently cut off, there was a pleasing vista southward across the pond, through a wide indentation in the hills which form the shore there, where their opposite sides sloping toward each other suggested a stream flowing out in that direction through a wooded valley, but stream there was none. That way I looked between and over the near green hills to some distant and higher ones in the horizon, tinged with blue. Indeed, by standing on tiptoe I could catch a glimpse of some of the peaks of the still bluer and more distant mountain ranges in the northwest, those true-blue coins from heaven's own mint, and also of some portion of the village. But in other directions, even from this point, I could not see over or beyond the woods which surrounded me. It is well to have some water in your neighborhood, to give buoyancy to and float the earth. One value even of the smallest well is, that when you look into it you see that earth is not continent but insular. This is as important as that it keeps butter cool. When I looked across the pond from this peak toward the Sudbury meadows, which in time of flood I distinguished elevated perhaps by a mirage in their seething valley, like a coin in a basin, all the earth beyond the pond appeared like a thin crust insulated and floated even by this small sheet of intervening water, and I was reminded that this on which I dwelt was but *dry land.*

Though the view from my door was still more contracted, I did not feel crowded or confined in the least. There was pasture enough for my imagination. The low shrub-oak plateau to which the opposite shore arose, stretched away toward the prairies of the West and the steppes of Tartary, affording ample room for all the roving families of men. "There are none happy in the world but beings who enjoy freely a vast horizon,"—said Damodara,[12] when his herds required new and larger pastures.

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[11] An ancient Sanscrit poem.

Both place and time were changed, and I dwelt nearer to those parts of the universe and to those eras in history which had most attracted me. Where I lived was as far off as many a region viewed nightly by astronomers. We are wont to imagine rare and delectable places in some remote and more celestial corner of the system, behind the constellation of Cassiopeia's Chair, far from noise and disturbance. I discovered that my house actually had its site in such a withdrawn, but forever new and unprofaned, part of the universe. If it were worth the while to settle in those parts near to the Pleiades or the Hyades,[13] to Aldebaran or Altair,[14] then I was really there, or at an equal remoteness from the life which I had left behind, dwindled and twinkling with as fine a ray to my nearest neighbor, and to be seen only in moonless nights by him. Such was that part of creation where I had squatted:

> There was a shepherd that did live,
> And held his thoughts as high
> As were the mounts whereon his flocks
> Did hourly feed him by.

What should we think of the shepherd's life if his flocks always wandered to higher pastures than his thoughts?

Every morning was a cheerful invitation to make my life of equal simplicity, and I may say innocence, with Nature herself. I have been as sincere a worshiper of Aurora as the Greeks. I got up early and bathed in the pond; that was a religious exercise, and one of the best things which I did. They say that characters were engraven on the bathing tub of king Tching-thang to this effect: "Renew thyself completely each day; do it again, and again, and forever again." I can understand that. Morning brings back the heroic ages. I was as much affected by the faint hum of a mosquito making its invisible and unimaginable tour through my apartment at earliest dawn, when I was sitting with door and windows open, as I could be by any trumpet that ever sang of fame. It was Homer's requiem; itself an Iliad and Odyssey in the air, singing its own wrath and wanderings. There was something cosmical about it; a standing advertisement, till forbidden, of the everlasting vigor and fertility of the world. The morning, which is the most memorable season of the day, is the awakening hour. Then there is least somnolence in us; and for an hour, at least, some part of us awakes which slumbers all the rest of the day and night. Little is to be expected of that day, if it can be called a day, to which we are not awakened by our Genius, but by the mechanical nudgings of some servitor, are not awakened by our own newly-acquired force and aspirations from within, accompanied by the undulations of celestial music, instead of factory bells, and a fragrance filling the air—to a higher life than we fell asleep from; and thus the darkness bear its fruit, and prove itself to be good, no less than the light. That man who does not believe that each day contains an earlier, more sacred, and auroral hour than he has yet profaned, has despaired of life, and is pursuing a descending and darkening way. After a partial cessation of his sensuous life, the soul of man, or its organs rather, are reinvigorated each day, and his Genius tries again what noble life it can make. All memorable events, I should say, transpire in morning time and in a morning atmosphere. The Vedas[15] say, "All intelligences awake with the morning." Poetry and art, and the fairest and most memorable of the actions of men, date from such an hour. All poets and heroes, like Memnon, are the children of Aurora, and emit their music at sunrise.[16] To him whose elastic and vigorous thought keeps pace with the sun, the day is a perpetual morning. It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me. Moral reform is the effort to throw off sleep. Why is it that men give so poor an account of their day if they have not been slumbering? They are not such poor calculators. If they had not been overcome with drowsiness they would have performed something. The millions are awake enough for physical labor; but only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to a poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face?

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[12] A name for Krishna, a Hindoo divinity.
[13] Star groups.
[14] Stars.
[15] Ancient writings of India dating before 1500 B. C.
[16] The colossal statue at Thebes, when struck by the rays of the morning sun, gave forth, it was believed, a musical sound; it was hence supposed to represent Memnon, a solar hero who fought in the Trojan war, who thus greeted his mother Aurora, the Dawn.

We must learn to reawaken and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour. If we refused, or rather used up, such paltry information as we get, the oracles would distinctly inform us how this might be done.

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.[17] I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practice resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime, to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion. For most men, it appears to me, are in a strange uncertainty about it, whether it is of the devil or of God, and have *somewhat hastily* concluded that it is the chief end of man here to "glorify God and enjoy him forever."

Still we live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes;[18] it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasion a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb nail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning, and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify. Instead of three meals a day, if it be necessary eat but one; instead of a hundred dishes, five; and reduce other things in proportion. Our life is like a German Confederacy, made up of petty states, with its boundary forever fluctuating, so that even a German cannot tell you how it is bounded at any moment. The nation itself, with all its so-called internal improvements, which, by the way are all external and superficial, is just such an unwieldy and overgrown establishment, cluttered with furniture and tripped up by its own traps, ruined by luxury and heedless expense, by want of calculation and a worthy aim, as the million households in the land; and the only cure for it as for them is in a rigid economy, a stern and more than Spartan simplicity of life and elevation of purpose. It lives too fast. Men think that it is essential that the *Nation* have commerce, and export ice, and talk through a telegraph, and ride thirty miles an hour, without a doubt, whether *they* do or not; but whether we should live like baboons or like men, is a little uncertain. If we do not get out sleepers, and forge rails, and devote days and nights to the work, but go to tinkering upon our *lives* to improve *them,* who will build railroads? And if railroads are not built, how shall we get to heaven in season? But if we stay at home and mind our business, who will want railroads? We do not ride on the railroad; it rides upon us.[19] Did you ever think what those sleepers are that underlie the railroad? Each one is a man, an Irishman, or a Yankee man. The rails are laid on them, and they are covered with sand, and the cars run smoothly over them. They are sound sleepers, I assure you. And every few years a new lot is laid down and run over; so that, if some have the pleasure of riding on a rail, others have the misfortune to be ridden upon. And when they run over a man that is walking in his sleep, a supernumary sleeper in the wrong position, and wake him up, they suddenly stop the cars, and make a hue and cry about it, as if this were an exception. I am glad to know that it takes a gang of men for every five miles to keep the sleepers down and level in their beds as it is, for this is a sign that they may sometime get up again.

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[17] Cf. Stevenson's more suavely stated but similar thought in *Æs Triplex* and *El Dorado.*

[18] According to Homer, the pygmies, or dwarfs, were obliged each autumn to defend themselves against the cranes on the shores of the ocean. See *Iliad,* iii. 6.

[19] Cf. Ruskin, *Fors Clavigera,* Letter v. "You Enterprised a Railroad through the valley—you blasted its rock away, heaped thousands of tons of shale into its lovely stream. The valley is gone and the Gods with it; and now, every fool in Buxton can be in Bakewell in half an hour, and every fool in Bakewell at Buxton; which you think a lucrative process of exchange—you Fools Everywhere."

Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches today to save nine tomorrow. As for *work,* we haven't any of any consequence. We have the Saint Vitus' dance, and cannot possibly keep our heads still. If I should only give a few pulls at the parish bell-rope, as for a fire, that is, without setting the bell,[20] there is hardly a man on his farm in the outskirts of Concord, notwithstanding that press of engagements which was his excuse so many times this morning, nor a boy, nor a woman, I might almost say, but would forsake all and follow that sound, not mainly to save property from the flames, but, if we will confess the truth, much more to see it burn, since burn it must, and we, be it known, did not set it on fire,—or to see it put out, and have a hand in it, if that is done as handsomely; yes, even if it were the parish church itself. Hardly a man takes a half hour's nap after dinner, but when he wakes he holds up his head and asks, "What's the news?" as if the rest of mankind had stood his sentinels. Some give directions to be waked every half hour, doubtless for no other purpose; and then, to pay for it, they tell what they have dreamed. After a night's sleep the news is as indispensable as the breakfast. "Pray tell me anything new that has happened to a man anywhere on this globe,"—and he reads it over his coffee and rolls, that a man has had his eyes gouged out this morning on the Wachito River; never dreaming the while that he lives in the dark unfathomed mammoth cave of this world, and has but the rudiment of an eye himself.

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From IV. Sounds

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Sometimes, on Sundays, I heard the bells, the Lincoln, Acton, Bedford, or Concord bell, when the wind was favorable, a faint, sweet, and, as it were, natural melody, worth importing into the wilderness. At a sufficient distance over the woods this sound acquires a certain vibratory hum, as if the pine needles in the horizon were the strings of a harp which it swept. All sound heard at the greatest possible distance produces one and the same effect, a vibration of the universal lyre, just as the intervening atmosphere makes a distant ridge of earth interesting to our eyes by the azure tint it imparts to it. There came to me in this case a melody which the air had strained, and which had conversed with every leaf and needle of the wood, that portion of the sound which the elements had taken up and modulated and echoed from vale to vale. The echo is, to some extent, an original sound, and therein is the magic and charm of it. It is not merely a repetition of what was worth repeating in the bell, but partly the voice of the wood; the same trivial words and notes sung by a wood-nymph.

At evening, the distant lowing of some cow in the horizon beyond the woods sounded sweet and melodious, and at first I would mistake it for the voices of certain minstrels by whom I was sometimes serenaded, who might be straying over hill and dale; but soon I was not unpleasantly disappointed when it was prolonged into the cheap and natural music of the cow. I do not mean to be satirical, but to express my appreciation of those youths' singing, when I state that I perceived clearly that it was akin to the music of the cow, and they were at length one articulation of Nature.

Regularly at half past seven, in one part of the summer, after the evening train had gone by, the whippoorwills chanted their vespers for half an hour, sitting on a stump by my door, or upon the ridgepole of the house. They would begin to sing almost with as much precision as a clock, within five minutes of a particular time, referred to the setting of the sun, every evening. I had a rare opportunity to become acquainted with their habits. Sometimes I heard four or five at once in different parts of the wood, by accident one a bar behind another, and so near me that I distinguished not only the cluck after each note, but often that singular buzzing sound like a fly in a spider's web, only proportionally louder. Sometimes one would circle round and round me in the woods a few feet distant as if tethered by a string, when probably I was near its eggs. They sang at intervals throughout the night, and were again as musical as ever just before and about dawn.

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[20] Making it stand upside down; but any careless jerk of the rope would draw the crowd, Thoreau thought.

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From XVII. Spring

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One attraction in coming to the woods to live was that I should have leisure and opportunity to see the spring come in. The ice in the pond at length begins to be honeycombed, and I can set my heel in it as I walk. Fogs and rains and warmer suns are gradually melting the snow; the days have grown sensibly longer; and I see how I shall get through the winter without adding to my wood-pile, for large fires are no longer necessary. I am on the alert for the first signs of spring, to hear the chance note of some arriving bird, or the striped squirrel's chirp, for his stores must be now nearly exhausted, or see the woodchuck venture out of his winter quarters. On the 13th of March, after I had heard the bluebird, song-sparrow, and red-wing, the ice was still nearly a foot thick. As the weather grew warmer it was not sensibly worn away by the water, nor broken up and floated off as in rivers, but, though it was completely melted for half a rod in width about the shore, the middle was merely honey-combed and saturated with water, so that you could put your foot through it when six inches thick; but by the next day evening, perhaps, after a warm rain followed by fog, it would have wholly disappeared, all gone off with the fog, spirited away. One year I went across the middle only five days before it disappeared entirely.

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When the ground was partially bare of snow, and a few warm days had dried its surface somewhat, it was pleasant to compare the first tender signs of the infant year just peeping forth, with the stately beauty of the withered vegetation which had withstood the winter,—life-everlasting, golden-rods, pinweeds, and graceful wild grasses, more obvious and interesting frequently than in summer even, as if their beauty was not ripe till then; even cotton-grass, cat-tails, mulleins, johnswort, hardhack, meadow-sweet, and other strong-stemmed plants, those unexhausted granaries which entertain the earliest birds,—decent weeds, at least, which widowed Nature wears. I am particularly attracted by the arching and sheaf-like top of the wool-grass; it brings back the summer to our winter memories, and is among the forms which art loves to copy, and which, in the vegetable kingdom, have the same relation to types already in the mind of man that astronomy has. It is an antique style, older than Greek or Egyptian. Many of the phenomena of Winter are suggestive of an inexpressible tenderness and fragile delicacy. We are accustomed to hear this king described as a rude and boisterous tyrant; but with the gentleness of a lover he adorns the tresses of Summer.

At the approach of spring the red squirrels got under my house, two at a time, directly under my feet as I sat reading or writing, and kept up the queerest chuckling and chirruping and vocal pirouetting and gurgling sounds that ever were heard; and when I stamped they only chirruped the louder, as if past all fear and respect in their mad pranks, defying humanity to stop them. No you don't—chickaree—chickaree. They were wholly deaf to my arguments, or failed to perceive their force, and fell into a strain of invective that was irresistible.

The first sparrow of spring! The year beginning with younger hope than ever! The faint silvery warblings heard over the partially bare and moist fields from the bluebird, the song-sparrow, and the red-wing, as if the last flakes of winter tinkled as they fell! What at such a time are histories, chronologies, traditions, and all written revelations? The brooks sing carols and glees to the spring. The marsh-hawk sailing low over the meadow is already seeking the first slimy life that awakes. The sinking sound of melting snow is heard in all dells, and the ice dissolves apace in the ponds. The grass flames up on the hillsides like a spring fire,—*"et primitus oritur herba imbribus primoribus evocata,"*[21]—as if the earth sent forth an inward heat to greet the returning sun; not yellow but green is the color of its flame;—the symbol of perpetual youth, the grass-blade, like a long green ribbon, streams from the sod into the summer, checked indeed by the frost, but anon pushing on again, lifting its spear of last year's hay with the fresh life below. It grows as steadily as the rill oozes out of the ground. It is almost identical with that, for in the growing days of June, when the rills are dry, the grass blades are their channels, and from year to year the herds drink at this perennial green stream, and the mower draws from it betimes their winter supply. So our human life but dies

[21] "And first the grass appears, called forth by the early rains."
Varro, *Rerum Rusticarum*, ii. 2.

down to its root, and still puts forth its green blade to eternity.

Walden is melting apace. There is a canal two rods wide along the northerly and westerly sides, and wider still at the east end. A great field of ice has cracked off from the main body. I hear a song-sparrow singing from the bushes on the shore,—*olit, olit, olit,—chip, chip, chip, che, char,—che wiss, wiss, wiss.* He too is helping to crack it. How handsome the great sweeping curves in the edge of the ice, answering somewhat to those of the shore, but more regular! It is unusually hard, owing to the recent severe but transient cold, and all watered or waved like a palace floor. But the wind slides eastward over its opaque surface in vain, till it reaches the living surface beyond. It is glorious to behold this ribbon of water sparkling in the sun, the bare face of the pond full of glee and youth, as if it spoke the joy of the fishes within it, and of the sands on its shore,—a silvery sheen as from the scales of a *leuciscus*,[22] as it were all one active fish. Such is the contrast between winter and spring. Walden was dead and is alive again. But this spring it broke up more steadily, as I have said.

The change from storm and winter to serene and mild weather, from dark and sluggish hours to bright and elastic ones, is a memorable crisis which all things proclaim. It is seemingly instantaneous at last. Suddenly an influx of light filled my house, though the evening was at hand, and the clouds of winter still overhung it, and the eaves were dripping with sleety rain. I looked out of the window, and lo! where yesterday was cold gray ice there lay the transparent pond already calm and full of hope as in a summer evening, reflecting a summer evening sky in its bosom, though none was visible overhead, as if it had intelligence with some remote horizon. I heard a robin in the distance, the first I had heard for many a thousand years, methought, whose note I shall not forget for many a thousand more,—the same sweet and powerful song as of yore. O the evening robin, at the end of a New England summer day! If I could ever find the twig he sits upon! I mean *he;* I mean *the twig.* This at least is not the *Turdus*[23] *migratorius.* The pitch-pines and shrub-oaks about my house, which had so long drooped, suddenly resumed their several characters, looked brighter, greener, and more erect and alive, as if effectually cleansed and restored by the rain. I knew that it would not rain any more. You may tell by looking at any twig of the forest, ay, at your very woodpile, whether its winter is past or not. As it grew darker, I was startled by the *honking* of geese flying low over the woods, like weary travelers getting in late from southern lakes, and indulging at last in unrestrained complaint and mutual consolation. Standing at my door, I could hear the rush of their wings; when, driving toward my house, they suddenly spied my light, and with hushed clamor wheeled and settled in the pond. So I came in, and shut the door, and passed my first spring night in the woods.

In the morning I watched the geese from the door through the mist, sailing in the middle of the pond, fifty rods off, so large and tumultuous that Walden appeared like an artificial pond for their amusement. But when I stood on the shore they at once rose up with a great flapping of wings at the signal of their commander, and when they had got into rank circled about over my head, twenty-nine of them, and then steered straight to Canada, with a regular *honk* from the leader at intervals, trusting to break their fast in muddier pools. A "plump" of ducks rose at the same time and took the route to the north in the wake of their noisier cousins.

For a week I heard the circling groping clangor of some solitary goose in the foggy mornings, seeking its companion, and still peopling the woods with the sound of a larger life than they could sustain. In April the pigeons were seen again flying express in small flocks, and in due time I heard the martins twittering over my clearing, though it had not seemed that the township contained so many that it could afford me any, and I fancied that they were peculiarly of the ancient race that dwelt in hollow trees ere white men came. In almost all climes the tortoise and the frog are among the precursors and heralds of this season, and birds fly with song and glancing plumage, and plants spring and bloom, and winds blow, to correct this slight oscillation of the poles and preserve the equilibrium of Nature.

As every season seems best to us in its turn, so the coming in of spring is like the creation of Cosmos[24] out of Chaos and the realization of the Golden Age.—

> "*Eurus ad Auroram, Nabathacaque regna recessit,*
> *Persidaque, et radiis juga subdita matutinis.*"

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[22] A genus of fish including the dace and the roach.

[23] Or *Merula migratoria*, the American robin.

[24] A world.

The East-Wind withdrew to Aurora and the
Nabathæan kingdom,
And the Persian, and the ridges placed under
the morning rays.

Man was born. Whether that Artificer of
things,
The origin of a better world, made him from
the divine seed;
Or the earth being recent and lately sundered
from the high
Ether, retained some seeds of cognate
heaven.

A single gentle rain makes the grass many shades greener. So our prospects brighten on the influx of better thoughts. We should be blessed if we lived in the present always, and took advantage of every accident that befell us, like the grass which confesses the influence of the slightest dew that falls on it; and did not spend our time in atoning for the neglect of past opportunities, which we call doing our duty. We loiter in winter while it is already spring. In a pleasant spring morning all men's sins are forgiven. Such a day is a truce to vice. While such a sun holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return. Through our own recovered innocence we discern the innocence of our neighbors. You may have known your neighbor yesterday for a thief, a drunkard, or a sensualist, and merely pitied or despised him, and despaired of the world; but the sun shines bright and warm this first spring morning, recreating the world, and you meet him at some serene work, and see how his exhausted and debauched veins expand with still joy and bless the new day, feel the spring influence with the innocence of infancy, and all his faults are forgotten. There is not only an atmosphere of good will about him, but even a savor of holiness groping for expression, blindly and ineffectually perhaps, like a new-born instinct, and for a short hour the south hillside echoes to no vulgar jest. You see some innocent fair shoots preparing to burst from his gnarled rind and try another year's life, tender and fresh as the youngest plant. Even he has entered into the joy of his Lord. Why the jailer does not leave open his prison doors,—why the judge does not dismiss his case,—why the preacher does not dismiss his congregation! It is because they do not obey the hint which God gives them, nor accept the pardon which he freely offers to all.

. . . .

From XVIII. Conclusion

. . . .

I left the woods for as good a reason as I went there. Perhaps it seemed to me that I had several more lives to live, and could not spare any more time for that one. It is remarkable how easily and insensibly we fall into a particular route, and make a beaten track for ourselves. I had not lived there a week before my feet wore a path from my door to the pond-side; and though it is five or six years since I trod it, it is still quite distinct. It is true, I fear that others may have fallen into it, and so helped to keep it open. The surface of the earth is soft and impressible by the feet of men; and so with the paths which the mind travels. How worn and dusty, then, must be the highways of the world, how deep the ruts of tradition and conformity! I did not wish to take a cabin passage, but rather to go before the mast and on the deck of the world, for there I could best see the moonlight amid the mountains. I do not wish to go below now.

I learned this, at least, by my experiment; that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. He will put some things behind, will pass an invisible boundary; new, universal, and more liberal laws will begin to establish themselves around and within him; or the old laws be expanded, and interpreted in his favor in a more liberal sense, and he will live with the license of a higher order of beings. In proportion as he simplifies his life, the laws of the universe will appear less complex, and solitude will not be solitude, nor poverty poverty, nor weakness weakness. If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

. . . .

1845-1847 1854

PRAYER

Great God! I ask Thee for no meaner pelf,
Than that I may not disappoint myself;
That in my action I may soar as high
As I can now discern with this clear eye.

And next in value, which thy kindness
lends,
That I may greatly disappoint my friends,
Howe'er they think or hope that it may be

They may not dream how thou'st distinguished me.

That my weak hand may equal my firm faith,
And my life practice more than my tongue saith;
That my low conduct may not show,
Nor my relenting lines,
That I thy purpose did not know
Or overrated thy designs.

1842

THE FISHER'S BOY

My life is like a stroll upon the beach,
As near the ocean's edge as I can go;
My tardy steps its waves sometimes o'erreach,
Sometimes I stay to let them overflow.

My sole employment 'tis, and scrupulous care,
To place my gains beyond the reach of tides,—
Each smoother pebble, and each shell more rare,
Which Ocean kindly to my hand confides.

I have but few companions on the shore;
They scorn the strand who sail upon the sea;
Yet oft I think the ocean they've sailed o'er
Is deeper known upon the strand to me.

The middle sea contains no crimson dulse,
Its deeper waves cast up no pearls to view;
Along the shore my hand is on its pulse,
And I converse with many a shipwrecked crew.

1849

INSPIRATION

If with light head erect I sing,
Though all the Muses lend their force,
From my poor love of anything,
The verse is weak and shallow as its source.

But if with bended neck I grope
Listening behind me for my wit,
With faith superior to hope,
More anxious to keep back than forward it,—

Making my soul accomplice there
Unto the flame my heart hath lit,
Then will the verse forever wear,—
Time cannot bend the line which God has writ.

I hearing get, who had but ears,
And sight, who had but eyes before;
I moments live, who lived but years,
And truth discern, who knew but learning's lore.

Now chiefly is my natal hour,
And only now my prime of life;
Of manhood's strength it is the flower,
'Tis peace's end and war's beginning strife.

It comes in summer's broadest noon,
By a gray wall, or some chance place,
Unseasoning time, insulting June,
And vexing day with its presuming face.

I will not doubt the love untold
Which not my worth nor want hath bought,
Which wooed me young, and wooes me old,
And to this evening hath me brought.

1863

SAMUEL WOODWORTH

Born, Scituate, Massachusetts, 1785, died, New York City, 1842. After an apprenticeship in printing, Woodworth removed to New York in 1809, engaged in journalism, and founded in 1823, with George P. Morris, the *New York Mirror*. He produced a volume of poems in 1818, and in 1825 a play, *The Forest Rose*, which was popular for twenty years.

THE BUCKET

How dear to this heart are the scenes of my childhood,
When fond recollection presents them to view!
The orchard, the meadow, the deep-tangled wild-wood,
And every loved spot which my infancy knew!
The wide-spreading pond, and the mill that stood by it,
The bridge, and the rock where the cataract fell,
The cot of my father, the dairy-house nigh it,
And e'en the rude bucket that hung in the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket which hung in the well.

That moss-covered vessel I hailed as a treasure,
For often at noon, when returned from the field,

I found it the source of an exquisite pleasure,
The purest and sweetest that nature can yield.
How ardent I seized it, with hands that were glowing,
And quick to the white-pebbled bottom it fell;
Then soon, with the emblem of truth overflowing,
And dripping with coolness, it rose from the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket arose from the well.

How sweet from the green mossy brim to receive it,
As poised on the curb it inclined to my lips!
Not a full blushing goblet could tempt me to leave it,
The brightest that beauty or revelry sips.
And now, far removed from the loved habitation,
The tear of regret will intrusively swell,
As fancy reverts to my father's plantation,
And sighs for the bucket that hangs in the well—
The old oaken bucket, the iron-bound bucket,
The moss-covered bucket that hangs in the well!

1826

RICHARD HENRY DANA

Born at Cambridge, 1787, died at Boston, 1879. He was for three years at Harvard, after which he studied and practiced law. He was connected with the *North American Review* for five years from its founding in 1815. Ill-health greatly hindered his work, but he published poems in 1827, 1833, and 1849, and occasionally lectured upon Shakspere. Richard Henry Dana jr. was his son.

THE LITTLE BEACH-BIRD

Thou little bird, thou dweller by the sea,
Why takest thou its melancholy voice,
And with that boding cry
Why o'er the waves dost fly?
O, rather, bird, with me
Through the fair land rejoice!

Thy flitting form comes ghostly dim and pale,
As driven by a beating storm at sea;
Thy cry is weak and scared,
As if thy mates had shared
The doom of us. Thy wail,—
What doth it bring to me?

Thou call'st along the sand, and haunt'st the surge,
Restless, and sad; as if, in strange accord
With the motion and the roar
Of waves that drive to shore,
One spirit did ye urge—
The Mystery—the Word.

Of thousands, thou, both sepulcher and pall,
Old Ocean, art! A requiem o'er the dead,
From out thy gloomy cells
A tale of mourning tells,—
Tells of man's woe and fall,
His sinless glory fled.

Then turn thee, little bird, and take thy flight
Where the complaining sea shall sadness bring
Thy spirit never more.
Come, quit with me the shore,
For gladness and the light,
Where birds of summer sing.

1853

WILLIAM HENRY FURNESS

Born, Boston, 1802, died, Philadelphia, 1896. He graduated from Harvard, 1820, and was in 1825 installed pastor of the First Congregational Unitarian Church of Philadelphia, where he remained pastor for fifty years. In addition to many theological works he published translations from German prose and poetry, and *Verses: Translations and Hymns*, 1886.

EVENING HYMN

Slowly by God's hand unfurled,
Down around the weary world
Falls the darkness; oh, how still
Is the working of Thy will!

Mighty Maker! Here am I,—
Work in me as silently,
Veil the day's distracting sights,
Show me heaven's eternal lights.

From the darkened sky come forth
Countless stars, a wondrous birth!
So may gleams of glory dart,
Through the dim abyss, my heart;

Living worlds to view be brought
In the boundless realms of thought,
High and infinite desires,
Burning like those upper fires.

Holy truth, eternal right,
Let them break upon my sight.
Let them shine unclouded, still,
And with light my being fill.

Thou art there. Oh, let me know,
Thou art here within me too;
Be the perfect peace of God
Here as there now shed abroad.

May my soul attuned be
To that perfect harmony,
Which, beyond the power of sound,
Fills the universe around.

1886

SAMUEL FRANCIS SMITH

Born, Boston, 1808, died there, 1895. He graduated from Harvard in the class with Holmes and entered the Baptist ministry. He wrote many hymns, *The Morning Light Is Breaking*, being, aside from *America*, probably the best known. See Holmes, *The Boys*, p. 648, l. 29.

AMERICA[1]

My country,—'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring.

My native country,—thee,
Land of the noble, free,
Thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills,
My heart with rapture thrills
Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
Sweet freedom's song;
Let mortal tongues awake,
Let all that breathe partake,
Let rocks their silence break,—
The sound prolong.

Our fathers' God,—to Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing;
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light,
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King.

1832 1832

WILLIAM HICKLING PRESCOTT

Born, Salem, Massachusetts, 1796, died, Boston, 1859. Prescott was born of distinguished ancestry, graduated from Harvard in 1814, and entered upon the study of law. An accident at college had left him with greatly impaired eyesight, which rapidly grew worse. He turned from law to literature and, carefully saving his strength, settled down to the study of Spanish-American history as his life work. His chief essays and books are *Italian Narrative Poetry*, 1824; *The History of Ferdinand and Isabella* 1837; *The Conquest of Mexico*, 1843; *The Conquest of Peru*, 1847; *Philip the Second*, 1855-1858.

From HISTORY OF THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO[1]

Book III. Chapter VIII

March Resumed.—Ascent of the Great Volcano.—Valley of Mexico.—Impression on the Spaniards.—Conduct of Montezuma.—They Descend Into the Valley.

1519

Everything being now restored to quiet in Cholula, the allied army of Spaniards and Tlascalans set forward in high spirits and resumed the march on Mexico.[2] The road lay through the beautiful savannas and luxuriant plantations that spread out for several leagues in every direction. On the march they were met occasionally by embassies from the neighboring places, anxious to claim the protection of the white men and to propitiate them by gifts, especially of gold, for which their appetite was generally known throughout the country.

Some of these places were allies of the Tlascalans, and all showed much discontent with the oppressive rule of Montezuma. The natives cautioned the Spaniards against putting themselves in his power by entering his capital; and they stated, as evidence of his hostile disposition, that he had caused the direct road to it to be blocked up that the strangers might be compelled to choose another which, from its narrow passes and strong positions, would enable him to take them at great disadvantage.

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[1] The poem is printed from an autograph version dated May, 1894, in the Leland Stanford Junior University Library.

[1] Prescott's choice of subjects connected with Spanish history was most natural. Possibly because the American historians had at hand a topic so picturesque as the discovery and occupation of America, we find in American literature a group of writers who have with unusual charm developed the romance of history.

[2] Cortés had landed at Vera Cruz in April, 1519, and had in August begun his march to Mexico City, where lived the great Montezuma, the so-called emperor of Mexico. The inhabitants of the town of Tlascala, capital of the small republic of that name, had at first opposed, but later submitted to Cortés, and six thousand had joined him as allies in a march upon their rivals, the Cholulans. The Cholulans made a conspiracy against Cortés, he avenged by a massacre of the inhabitants, which is a blot upon Spanish history. He is here just leaving Cholula.

The information was not lost on Cortés, who kept a strict eye on the movements of the Mexican envoys and redoubled his own precautions against surprise. Cheerful and active, he was ever where his presence was needed, sometimes in the van, at others in the rear, encouraging the weak, stimulating the sluggish, and striving to kindle in the breasts of others the same courageous spirit which glowed in his own. At night he never omitted to go the rounds to see that every man was at his post. On one occasion his vigilance had well nigh proved fatal to him. He approached so near a sentinel that the man, unable to distinguish his person in the dark, leveled his crossbow at him, when fortunately an exclamation of the general, who gave the watchword of the night, arrested a movement which might else have brought the campaign to a close and given a respite for some time longer to the empire of Montezuma.

The army came at length to the place mentioned by the friendly Indians, where the road forked, and one arm of it was found, as they had foretold, obstructed with large trunks of trees and huge stones which had been strewn across it. Cortés inquired the meaning of this from the Mexican ambassadors. They said it was done by the emperor's orders, to prevent their taking a route which after some distance they would find nearly impracticable for the cavalry. They acknowledged, however, that it was the most direct road; and Cortés, declaring that this was enough to decide him in favor of it, as the Spaniards made no account of obstacles, commanded the rubbish to be cleared away. Some of the timber might still be seen by the roadside, as Bernal Diaz[3] tells us, many years after. The event left little doubt in the general's mind of the meditated treachery of the Mexicans. But he was too politic to betray his suspicions.

They were now leaving the pleasant champaign country, as the road wound up the bold sierra which separates the great plateaus of Mexico and Puebla. The air, as they ascended, became keen and piercing; and the blasts sweeping down the frozen sides of the mountains made the soldiers shiver in their thick harness of cotton,[4] and benumbed the limbs of both men and horses.

They were passing between two of the highest mountains on the North American continent—Popocatepetl,[5] "the hill that smokes," and Iztaccihuatl,[6] or "white woman," a name suggested doubtless by the bright robe of snow spread over its broad and broken surface. A puerile superstition of the Indians regarded these celebrated mountains as gods, and Iztaccihuatl as the wife of her more formidable neighbor. A tradition of a higher character described the northern volcano as the abode of the departed spirits of wicked rulers, whose fiery agonies in their prison-house caused the fearful bellowings and convulsions in times of eruption. It was the classic fable of Antiquity.[7] These superstitious legends had invested the mountain with a mysterious horror that made the natives shrink from attempting its ascent, which, indeed, was from natural causes a work of incredible difficulty.

The great *volcan,* as Popocatepetl was called, rose to the enormous height of 17,852 feet above the level of the sea—more than two thousand feet above the "monarch of mountains," the highest elevation in Europe.[8] During the present century it has rarely given evidence of its volcanic origin, and "the hill that smokes" has almost forfeited its claim to the appellation. But at the time of the Conquest it was frequently in a state of activity and raged with uncommon fury while the Spaniards were at Tlascala—an evil omen, it was thought, for the natives of Anahuac.[9] Its head, gathered into a regular cone by the deposits of successive eruptions, wore the usual form of volcanic mountains when not disturbed by the falling in of the crater. Soaring towards the skies, with its silver sheet of everlasting snow, it was seen far and wide over the broad plains of Mexico and Puebla—the first object which the morning sun greeted in his rising, the last where his evening rays were seen to linger, shedding a glorious effulgence over its head that contrasted strikingly with the ruinous waste of sand and lava immediately below and the deep fringe of funereal pines that shrouded its base.

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[3] A soldier with Cortés. He later wrote a history of the conquest, published in 1632.

[4] The Mexicans wore "a close vest of quilted cotton so thick as to be impenetrable to the light missiles of Indian warfare. This garment was so light and serviceable that it was adopted by the Spaniards." Bk. I, Ch. 2.

[5] This volcano, forty miles southeast of Mexico City, is 17,876 feet high and has a crater 2000 feet in width.

[6] North of Popocatepetl, and 16,705 feet high.

[7] Enceladus, one of the hundred-armed giants that made war on the gods, was overcome by Zeus and buried under Mt. Ætna.

[8] Mt. Blanc, the highest mountain of the Alps, is 15,781 feet. Mt. Elbruz, the highest peak of the Caucasus, is 18,526 feet.

[9] Pronounced a-na-wak—a name given to that part of the central tableland near Mexico City.

The mysterious terrors which hung over the spot and the wild love of adventure, made some of the Spanish cavaliers desirous to attempt the ascent which the natives declared no man could accomplish and live. Cortés encouraged them in the enterprise, willing to show the Indians that no achievement was above the dauntless daring of his followers. One of his captains, accordingly, Diego Ordaz, with nine Spaniards and several Tlascalans, encouraged by their example, undertook the ascent. It was attended with more difficulty than had been anticipated.

The lower region was clothed with a dense forest, so thickly matted that in some places it was scarcely possible to penetrate it. It grew thinner, however, as they advanced, dwindling by degrees into a straggling, stunted vegetation till, at the height of somewhat more than thirteen thousand feet, it faded away altogether. The Indians who had held on thus far, intimidated by the strange subterranean sounds of the volcano, even then in a state of combustion, now left them. The track opened on a black surface of glazed volcanic sand and of lava, the broken fragments of which, arrested in its boiling progress in a thousand fantastic forms, opposed continual impediments to their advance. Amidst these one huge rock, the *Pico del Fraile,* a conspicuous object from below, rose to the perpendicular height of a hundred and fifty feet, compelling them to take a wide circuit. They soon came to the limits of perpetual snow, where new difficulties presented themselves, as the treacherous ice gave an imperfect footing, and a false step might precipitate them into the frozen chasms that yawned around. To increase their distress, respiration in these aërial regions became so difficult that every effort was attended with sharp pains in the head and limbs. Still they pressed on, till, drawing nearer the crater, such volumes of smoke, sparks, and cinders were belched forth from its burning entrails and driven down the sides of the mountain, as nearly suffocated and blinded them. It was too much even for their hardy frames to endure, and, however reluctantly, they were compelled to abandon the attempt on the eve of its completion. They brought back some huge icicles—a curious sight in these tropical regions—as a trophy of their achievement, which, however imperfect, was sufficient to strike the minds of the natives with wonder by showing that with the Spaniards the most appalling and mysterious perils were only as pastimes. The undertaking was eminently characteristic of the bold spirit of the cavalier of that day, who, not content with the dangers that lay in his path, seemed to court them from the mere Quixotic[10] love of adventure. A report of the affair was transmitted to the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and the family of Ordaz was allowed to commemorate the exploit by assuming a burning mountain on their escutcheon.

The general was not satisfied with the result. Two years after, he sent up another party, under Francisco Montaño, a cavalier of determined resolution. The object was to obtain sulphur to assist in making gunpowder for the army. The mountain was quiet at this time, and the expedition was attended with better success. The Spaniards, five in number, climbed to the very edge of the crater, which presented an irregular ellipse at its mouth, more than a league in circumference. Its depth might be from eight hundred to a thousand feet. A lurid flame burned gloomily at the bottom, sending up a sulphureous steam, which, cooling as it rose, was precipitated on the sides of the cavity. The party cast lots, and it fell on Montaño himself to descend in a basket into this hideous abyss, into which he was lowered by his companions to the depth of four hundred feet! This was repeated several times till the adventurous cavalier had collected a sufficient quantity of sulphur for the wants of the army. This doughty enterprise excited general admiration at the time. Cortés concludes his report of it to the emperor with the judicious reflection that it would be less inconvenient, on the whole, to import their powder from Spain.

But it is time to return from our digression, which may, perhaps, be excused as illustrating in a remarkable manner the chimerical spirit of enterprise—not inferior to that in his own romances of chivalry[11]—which glowed in the breast of the Spanish cavalier in the sixteenth century.

The army held on its march through the intricate gorges of the sierra. The route was nearly the same as that pursued at the present day by the courier from the capital to Puebla, by the way of Mecameca. It was not that usually taken by travelers from Vera Cruz, who follow the more circuitous road round the northern base of Iztaccihuatl, as less fatiguing than the other, though inferior in picturesque scenery and romantic points of view. The icy winds that now swept down the sides of the mountains brought with them a tempest of arrowy sleet and snow, from which the Christians suffered even more than the Tlascalans reared from infancy among the wild solitudes of their own native hills. As night came on, their sufferings would have been intolerable, but they luckily found a shelter in the commodious stone buildings which the Mexican government had placed at stated intervals along the roads for the accommodation of the traveler and their own couriers. It little dreamed it was providing a protection for its enemies.

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[10] See p. 476 ff.

[11] The romances clustering about the Cid (the great Spanish hero), Don Roderic, Charlemagne, Amadis, and others were most fanciful and chimerical. See note 10, p. 476.

The troops, refreshed by a night's rest, succeeded, early on the following day, in gaining the crest of the sierra of Ahualco, which stretches like a curtain between the two great mountains on the north and south. Their progress was now comparatively easy, and they marched forward with a buoyant step, as they felt they were treading the soil of Montezuma.

They had not advanced far when, turning an angle of the sierra, they suddenly came on a view which more than compensated the toils of the preceding day. It was that of the Valley of Mexico, or Tenochtitlan, as more commonly called by the natives; which, with its picturesque assemblage of water, woodland, and cultivated plains, its shining cities[12] and shadowy hills, was spread out like some gay and gorgeous panorama before them. In the highly rarefied atmosphere of these upper regions even remote objects have a brilliancy of coloring and a distinctness of outline which seem to annihilate distance. Stretching far away at their feet were seen noble forests of oak, sycamore, and cedar, and beyond, yellow fields of maize and the towering maguey, intermingled with orchards and blooming gardens; for flowers, in such demand for their religious festivals, were even more abundant in this populous valley than in other parts of Anahuac. In the center of the great basin were beheld the lakes, occupying then a much larger portion of its surface than at present; their borders thickly studded with towns and hamlets, and in the midst, like some Indian empress with her coronal of pearls, the fair city of Mexico with her white towers and pyramidal temples, reposing, as it were, on the bosom of the waters—the far-famed "Venice of the Aztecs." High over all rose the royal hill of Chapoltepec, the residence of the Mexican monarchs, crowned with the same grove of gigantic cypresses, which at this day fling their broad shadows over the land. In the distance, beyond the blue waters of the lake and nearly screened by intervening foliage, was seen a shining speck, the rival capital of Tezcuco,[13] and still further on, the dark belt of porphyry, girdling the valley around like a rich setting which nature had devised for the fairest of her jewels.

Such was the beautiful vision which broke on the eyes of the conquerors. And even now, when so sad a change has come over the scene; when the stately forests have been laid low, and the soil, unsheltered from the fierce radiance of a tropical sun, is in many places abandoned to sterility; when the waters have retired, leaving a broad and ghastly margin white with the incrustation of salts, while the cities and hamlets on their borders have moldered into ruins—even now that desolation broods over the landscape, so indestructible are the lines of beauty which Nature has traced on its features that no traveler, however cold, can gaze on them with any other emotions than those of astonishment and rapture.

What, then, must have been the emotions of the Spaniards when, after working their toilsome way into the upper air, the cloudy tabernacle parted before their eyes and they beheld these fair scenes in all their pristine magnificence and beauty! It was like the spectacle which greeted the eyes of Moses from the summit of Pisgah,[14] and in the warm glow of their feelings they cried out, "It is the promised land!"

But these feelings of admiration were soon followed by others of a very different complexion, as they saw in all this the evidences of a civilization and power far superior to anything they had yet encountered. The more timid, disheartened by the prospect, shrunk from a contest so unequal, and demanded, as they had done on some former occasions, to be led back again to Vera Cruz. Such was not the effect produced on the sanguine spirit of the general. His avarice was sharpened by the display of the dazzling spoil at his feet, and if he felt a natural anxiety at the formidable odds, his confidence was renewed as he gazed on the lines of his veterans, whose weather-beaten visages and battered armor told of battles won and difficulties surmounted, while his bold barbarians, with appetites whetted by the view of their enemies' country, seemed like eagles on the mountains, ready to pounce upon their prey. By argument, entreaty, and menace, he endeavored to restore the faltering courage of the soldiers, urging them not to think of retreat, now that they had reached the goal for which they had panted and the golden gates were opened to receive them. In these efforts he was well seconded by the brave cavaliers, who held honor as dear to them as fortune; until the dullest spirits caught somewhat of the enthusiasm of their leaders, and the general had the satisfaction to see his hesitating columns, with their usual buoyant step, once more on their march down the slopes of the sierra.

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[12] Prescott placed more confidence in the statements of the early Spanish and Mexican writers than do later historians. Some of these descriptions are perhaps somewhat exaggerated, but they are fundamentally true. See *Ency. Brit.*, "Mexico"—Civilization.

[13] The Tezcucans, who had been independent, but were now subject to Montezuma, joined Cortés, the following year, in his siege of Mexico City.

[14] A mountain, also called Mt. Nebo, northeast of the Dead Sea, from which Moses viewed Canaan. *Deuteronomy* iii. 27; xxxiv. 1.

With every step of their progress the woods became thinner; patches of cultivated land more frequent; and hamlets were seen in the green and sheltered nooks, the inhabitants of which coming out to meet them gave the troops a kind reception. Everywhere they heard complaints of Montezuma, especially of the unfeeling manner in which he carried off their young men to recruit his armies and their maidens for his harem. These symptoms of discontent were noticed with satisfaction by Cortés, who saw that Montezuma's "mountain throne," as it was called, was indeed seated on a volcano with the elements of combustion so active within that it seemed as if any hour might witness an explosion. He encouraged the disaffected natives to rely on his protection, as he had come to redress their wrongs. He took advantage, moreover, of their favorable dispositions to scatter among them such gleams of spiritual light as time and the preaching of father Olmedo could afford.

He advanced by easy stages, somewhat retarded by the crowd of curious inhabitants gathered on the highways to see the strangers, and halting at every spot of interest or importance. On the road he was met by another embassy from the capital. It consisted of several Aztec lords, freighted, as usual, with a rich largess of gold and robes of delicate furs and feathers. The message of the emperor was couched in the same deprecatory terms as before. He even condescended to bribe the return of the Spaniards by promising in that event four loads of gold to the general and one to each of the captains, with a yearly tribute to their sovereign. So effectually had the lofty and naturally courageous spirit of the barbarian monarch been subdued by the influence of superstition![15]

But the man whom the hostile array of armies could not daunt was not to be turned from his purpose by a woman's[16] prayers. He received the embassy with his usual courtesy, declaring, as before, that he could not answer it to his own sovereign if he were now to return without visiting the emperor in his capital. It would be much easier to arrange matters by a personal interview than by distant negotiation. The Spaniards came in the spirit of peace. Montezuma would so find it; but should their presence prove burdensome to him, it would be easy for them to relieve him of it.

The Aztec monarch meanwhile was a prey to the most dismal apprehensions. It was intended that the embassy above noticed should reach the Spaniards before they crossed the mountains. When he learned that this was accomplished and that the dread strangers were on their march across the Valley, the very threshold of his capital, the last spark of hope died away in his bosom. Like one who suddenly finds himself on the brink of some dark and yawning gulf, he was too much bewildered to be able to rally his thoughts or even to comprehend his situation. He was the victim of an absolute destiny, against which no foresight or precautions could have availed. It was as if the strange beings who had thus invaded his shores had dropped from some distant planet, so different were they from all he had ever seen, in appearance and manners; so superior—though a mere handful in numbers—to the banded nations of Anahuac in strength and science and all the fearful accompaniments of war! They were now in the Valley. The huge mountain screen which nature had so kindly drawn around it for its defense had been overleaped. The golden visions of security and repose in which he had so long indulged, the lordly sway descended from his ancestors, his broad imperial domain, were all to pass away. It seemed like some terrible dream—from which he was now, alas! to awake to a still more terrible reality.

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[15] Several things unnerved the monarch: the activity of Popocatepetl, an evil omen; the apparently superhuman daring of the Spaniards in crossing the mountains as they had done; the tradition that Quetzalcoatl, a deity believed to be a white man, was to send his brethren from the east to rule Mexico; and a prophecy made when he himself became king, that the empire would be desolated and the people enslaved.

[16] **Montezuma had lost all manly courage.**

In a paroxysm of despair he shut himself up in his palace, refused food, and sought relief in prayer and in sacrifice. But the oracles were dumb. He then adopted the more sensible expedient of calling a council of his principal and oldest nobles. Here was the same division of opinion which had before prevailed. Cacama, the young king of Tezcuco, his nephew, counseled him to receive the Spaniards courteously, as ambassadors, so styled by themselves, of a foreign prince. Cuitlahua, Montezuma's more warlike brother, urged him to muster his forces on the instant and drive back the invaders from his capital, or die in its defense. But the monarch found it difficult to rally his spirits for this final struggle. With downcast eye and dejected mien he exclaimed, "Of what avail is resistance when the gods have declared themselves against us! Yet I mourn most for the old and infirm, the women and children, too feeble to fight or to fly. For myself and the brave men around me, we must bare our breasts to the storm and meet it as we may!" Such are the sorrowful and sympathetic tones in which the Aztec emperor is said to have uttered the bitterness of his grief. He would have acted a more glorious part had he put his capital in a posture of defense and prepared, like the last of the Palæologi,[17] to bury himself under its ruins.

He straightway prepared to send a last embassy to the Spaniards, with his nephew, the lord of Tezcuco, at its head, to welcome them to Mexico.

The Christian army meanwhile had advanced as far as Amaquemecan, a well built town of several thousand inhabitants. They were kindly received by the cacique,[18] lodged in large, commodious stone buildings, and at their departure presented, among other things, with gold to the amount of three thousand *castellanos*.[19] Having halted there a couple of days, they descended among flourishing plantations of maize and of maguey, the latter of which might be called the Aztec vineyards, towards the lake of Chalco. Their first resting-place was Ajotzinco, a town of considerable size, with a great part of it then standing on piles in the water. It was the first specimen which the Spaniards had seen of this maritime architecture. The canals which intersected the city instead of streets presented an animated scene from the number of barks which glided up and down freighted with provisions and other articles for the inhabitants. The Spaniards were particularly struck with the style and commodious structure of the houses, built chiefly of stone, and with the general aspect of wealth and even elegance which prevailed there.

Though received with the greatest show of hospitality, Cortés found some occasion for distrust in the eagerness manifested by the people to see and approach the Spaniards. Not content with gazing at them in the roads, some even made their way stealthily into their quarters, and fifteen or twenty unhappy Indians were shot down by the sentinels as spies. Yet there appears, as well as we can judge at this distance of time, to have been no real ground for such suspicion. The undisguised jealousy of the Court, and the cautions he had received from his allies, while they very properly put the general on his guard, seem to have given an unnatural acuteness, at least in the present instance, to his perceptions of danger.

Early on the following morning, as the army was preparing to leave the place, a courier came, requesting the general to postpone his departure till after the arrival of the king of Tezcuco, who was advancing to meet him. It was not long before he appeared, borne in a palanquin, or litter, richly decorated with plates of gold and precious stones, having pillars curiously wrought, supporting a canopy of green plumes, a favorite color with the Aztec princes. He was accompanied by a numerous suite of nobles and inferior attendants. As he came into the presence of Cortés, the lord of Tezcuco descended from his palanquin, and the obsequious officers swept the ground before him as he advanced. He appeared to be a young man of about twenty-five years of age, with a comely presence, erect and stately in his deportment. He made the Mexican salutation usually addressed to persons of high rank, touching the earth with his right hand and raising it to his head. Cortés embraced him as he rose, when the young prince informed him that he came as the representative of Montezuma to bid the Spaniards welcome to his capital. He then presented the general with three pearls of uncommon size and luster. Cortés in return threw over Cacama's neck a chain of cut glass, which, where glass was as rare as diamonds, might be admitted to have a value as real as the latter. After this interchange of courtesies and the most friendly and respectful assurances on the part of Cortés, the Indian prince withdrew, leaving the Spaniards strongly impressed with the superiority of his state and bearing over anything they had hitherto seen in the country.

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[17] The family of most of the rulers of the Eastern Roman Empire from 1261 to the time of Constantine XII, the last emperor, who died with his troops when the Turks broke through the walls of Constantinople in 1453.

[18] chief

[19] A Spanish coin of the fourteenth century, worth about one-sixth of an ounce of gold or perhaps about $2.50.

Resuming its march, the army kept along the southern borders of the lake of Chalco, overshadowed at that time by noble woods and by orchards glowing with autumnal fruits of unknown names, but rich and tempting hues. More frequently it passed through cultivated fields waving with the yellow harvest and irrigated by canals introduced from the neighboring lake, the whole showing a careful and economical husbandry essential to the maintenance of a crowded population.

Leaving the main land, the Spaniards came on the great dike, or causeway, which stretches some four or five miles in length and divides lake Chalco from Xochicalco on the west. It was a lance in breadth in the narrowest part, and in some places wide enough for eight horsemen to ride abreast. It was a solid structure of stone and lime, running directly through the lake, and struck the Spaniards as one of the most remarkable works which they had seen in the country.

As they passed along they beheld the gay spectacle of multitudes of Indians darting up and down in their light pirogues,[20] eager to catch a glimpse of the strangers or bearing the products of the country to the neighboring cities. They were amazed, also, by the sight of the *chinampas,* or floating gardens—those wandering islands of verdure, to which we shall have occasion to return hereafter—teeming with flowers and vegetables and moving like rafts over the waters. All round the margin and occasionally far in the lake they beheld little towns and villages which, half concealed by the foliage and gathered in white clusters round the shore, looked in the distance like companies of wild swans riding quietly on the waves. A scene so new and wonderful filled their rude hearts with amazement. It seemed like enchantment; and they could find nothing to compare it with but the magical pictures in the *Amadis de Gaula.*[21] Few pictures, indeed, in that or any other legend of chivalry could surpass the realities of their own experience. The life of the adventurer in the New World was romance put into action. What wonder, then, if the Spaniard of that day, feeding his imagination with dreams of enchantment at home and with its realities abroad, should have displayed a Quixotic enthusiasm, a romantic exaltation of character not to be comprehended by the colder spirits of other lands!

Midway across the lake the army halted at the town of Cuitlahuac, a place of moderate size but distinguished by the beauty of the buildings—the most beautiful, according to Cortés, that he had yet seen in the country. After taking some refreshment at this place they continued their march along the dike. Though broader in this northern section, the troops found themselves much embarrassed by the throng of Indians, who not content with gazing on them from the boats, climbed up the causeway and lined the sides of the road. The general, afraid that his ranks might be disordered and that too great familiarity might diminish a salutary awe in the natives, was obliged to resort not merely to command but menace to clear a passage. He now found as he advanced a considerable change in the feelings shown towards the government. He heard only of the pomp and magnificence, nothing of the oppressions, of Montezuma. Contrary to the usual fact, it seemed that the respect for the court was greatest in its immediate neighborhood.

From the causeway the army descended on that narrow point of land which divides the waters of the Chalco from the Tezcucan lake, but which in those days was overflowed for many a mile now laid bare. Traversing this peninsula, they entered the royal residence of Iztapalapan, a place containing twelve or fifteen thousand houses, according to Cortés. It was governed by Cuitlahua, the emperor's brother, who, to do greater honor to the general, had invited the lords of some neighboring cities, of the royal house of Mexico like himself, to be present at the interview. This was conducted with much ceremony, and after the usual present of gold and delicate stuffs, a collation was served to the Spaniards in one of the great halls of the palace. The excellence of the architecture here also excited the admiration of the general, who does not hesitate, in the glow of his enthusiasm, to pronounce some of the buildings equal to the best in Spain. They were of stone, and the spacious apartments had roofs of odorous cedar-wood, while the walls were tapestried with fine cottons stained with brilliant colors.

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[20] Dug-out canoes.

[21] One of the great legendary heroes of the medieval romances of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. See note 10, p. 476.

But the pride of Iztapalapan, on which its lord had freely lavished his care and his revenues, was its celebrated gardens. They covered an immense tract of land, were laid out in regular squares, and the paths intersecting them were bordered with trellises supporting creepers and aromatic shrubs that loaded the air with their perfumes. The gardens were stocked with fruit trees imported from distant places and with the gaudy family of flowers which belong to Mexican flora, scientifically arranged and growing luxuriant in the equable temperature of the tableland. The natural dryness of the atmosphere was counteracted by means of aqueducts and canals that carried water into all parts of the grounds.

In one quarter was an aviary filled with numerous kinds of birds remarkable in this region both for brilliancy of plumage and of song. The gardens were intersected by a canal communicating with the lake of Tezcuco and of sufficient size for barges to enter from the latter. But the most elaborate piece of work was a huge reservoir of stone filled to a considerable height with water well supplied with different sorts of fish. This basin was sixteen hundred paces in circumference, and was surrounded by a walk, made also of stone, wide enough for four persons to go abreast. The sides were curiously sculptured, and a flight of steps led to the water below, which fed the aqueducts above noticed or, collected into fountains, diffused a perpetual moisture.

Such are the accounts transmitted of these celebrated gardens at a period when similar horticultural establishments were unknown in Europe; and we might well doubt their existence in this semi-civilized land were it not a matter of such notoriety at the time and so explicitly attested by the invaders.[22] But a generation had scarcely passed after the Conquest before a sad change came over these scenes so beautiful. The town itself was deserted and the shore of the lake was strewed with the wreck of buildings which once were its ornament and its glory. The gardens shared the fate of the city. The retreating waters withdrew the means of nourishment, converting the flourishing plains into a foul and unsightly morass, the haunt of loathsome reptiles; and the water-fowl built her nest in what had once been the palaces of princes!

In the city of Iztapalapan, Cortés took up his quarters for the night. We may imagine what a crowd of ideas must have pressed on the mind of the Conqueror as, surrounded by these evidences of civilization, he prepared with his handful of followers to enter the capital of a monarch who, as he had abundant reason to know, regarded him with distrust and aversion. This capital was now but a few miles distant, distinctly visible from Iztapalapan. And as its long lines of glittering edifices struck by the rays of the evening sun, trembled on the dark-blue waters of the lake, it looked like a thing of fairy creation rather than the work of mortal hands. Into this city of enchantment Cortés prepared to make his entry on the following morning.[23]

From Book VI, Chapter VI

General Assault on the City.—Defeat of the Spaniards.—Their Disastrous Condition.—Sacrifice of the Captives.—Defection of the Allies.—Constancy of the Troops.

1521

Famine was now gradually working its way into the heart of the beleaguered city. It seemed certain, that, with this strict blockade, the crowded population must in the end be driven to capitulate, though no arm should be raised against them. But it required time; and the Spaniards, though constant and enduring by nature, began to be impatient of hardships scarcely inferior to those experienced by the besieged. In some respects their condition was even worse, exposed, as they were, to the cold, drenching rains, which fell with little intermission, rendering their situation dreary and disastrous in the extreme.

In this state of things, there were many who would willingly have shortened their sufferings, and taken the chance of carrying the place by a *coup de main*.[24] Others thought it would be best to get possession of the great market of Tlatelolco, which, from its situation in the north-western part of the city, might afford the means of communication with the camps of both Alvarado and Sandoval.[25] This place, encompassed by spacious porticos, would furnish accommodations for a numerous host; and, once established in the capital, the Spaniards would be in a position to follow up the blow with far more effect than at a distance.

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[22] Prescott here refers in a note to five Spanish records of the conquest.

[23] Nov. 8, 1519. There follows a detailed account of the City of Mexico, the people, gods, customs, etc. Montezuma is persuaded to become the guest—really the prisoner—of Cortés. Learning too late of the Spanish desire for conquest and booty, and overcome with humiliation at his failure to maintain his people's supremacy, he refuses medicine, and dies. The Aztecs unite, and drive Cortés, with the small remnant of his army, out of the city; but, weakened by tribal jealousies, the natives are later, after some terrible battles, defeated. In May, 1521, Cortés for the second time marches upon and besieges Mexico City.

These arguments were pressed by several of the officers, particularly by Alderete, the royal treasurer, a person of much consideration, not only from his rank, but from the capacity and zeal he had shown in the service. In deference to their wishes, Cortés summoned a council of war, and laid the matter before it. The treasurer's views were espoused by most of the high-mettled cavaliers, who looked with eagerness to any change of their present forlorn and wearisome life; and Cortés, thinking it, probably, more prudent to adopt the less expedient course, than to enforce a cold and reluctant obedience to his own opinion, suffered himself to be overruled.

A day was fixed for the assault, which was to be made simultaneously by the two divisions under Alvarado and the commander-in-chief. Sandoval was instructed to draw off the greater part of his forces from the northern causeway, and to unite himself with Alvarado, while seventy picked soldiers were to be detached to the support of Cortés.

On the appointed morning the two armies, after the usual celebration of mass, advanced along their respective causeways against the city. They were supported, in addition to the brigantines,[26] by a numerous fleet of Indian boats, which were to force a passage up the canals, and by a countless multitude of allies, whose very numbers served in the end to embarrass their operations. After clearing the suburbs, three avenues presented themselves, which all terminated in the square of Tlatelolco. The principal one, being of much greater width than the other two, might rather be called a causeway than a street, since it was flanked by deep canals on either side. Cortés divided his force into three bodies. One of them he placed under Alderete, with orders to occupy the principal street. A second he gave in charge to Andres de Tapia and Jorge de Alvarado; the former a cavalier of courage and capacity, the latter, a younger brother of Don Pedro, and possessed of the intrepid spirit which belonged to that chivalrous family. These were to penetrate by one of the parallel streets, while the general himself, at the head of the third division, was to occupy the other. A small body of cavalry, with two or three field-pieces, was stationed as a reserve in front of the great street of Tacuba, which was designated as the rallying point for the different divisions.

Cortés gave the most positive instructions to his captains, not to advance a step without securing the means of retreat, by carefully filling up the ditches, and the openings in the causeway. The neglect of this precaution by Alvarado, in an assault which he had made on the city but a few days before, had been attended with such serious consequences to his army, that Cortés rode over, himself, to his officer's quarters, for the purpose of publicly reprimanding him for his disobedience of orders. On his arrival at the camp, however, he found that his offending captain had conducted the affair with so much gallantry, that the intended reprimand—though well deserved—subsided into a mild rebuke.

The arrangements being completed, the three divisions marched at once up the several streets. Cortés, dismounting, took the van of his own squadron, at the head of his infantry. The Mexicans fell back as he advanced, making less resistance than usual. The Spaniards pushed on, carrying one barricade after another, and carefully filling up the gaps with rubbish so as to secure themselves a footing. The canoes supported the attack, by moving along the canals, and grappling with those of the enemy; while numbers of the nimble-footed Tlascalans, scaling the terraces, passed on from one house to another, where they were connected, hurling the defenders into the streets below. The enemy, taken apparently by surprise, seemed incapable of withstanding for a moment the fury of the assault; and the victorious Christians, cheered on by the shouts of triumph which arose from their companions in the adjoining streets, were only the more eager to be first at the destined goal.

Indeed, the facility of his success led the general to suspect that he might be advancing too fast; that it might be a device of the enemy to draw them into the heart of the city, and then surround or attack them in the rear. He had some misgivings, moreover, lest his too ardent officers, in the heat of the chase, should, notwithstanding his commands, have overlooked the necessary precaution of filling up the breaches. He, accordingly, brought his squadron to a halt, prepared to baffle any insidious movement of his adversary. Meanwhile he received more than one message from Alderete, informing him that he had nearly gained the market. This only increased the general's apprehension, that, in the rapidity of his advance, he might have neglected to secure the ground. He determined to trust no eyes but his own, and, taking a small body of troops, proceeded at once to reconnoiter the route followed by the treasurer.

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[24] In war, a sudden attack in force.
[25] Spanish officers under Cortés.
[26] Swift, two-masted sailing vessels.

He had not proceeded far along the great street, or causeway, when his progress was arrested, by an opening ten or twelve paces wide, and filled with water, at least two fathoms deep, by which a communication was formed between the canals on the opposite sides. A feeble attempt had been made to stop the gap with the rubbish of the causeway, but in too careless a manner to be of the least service; and a few straggling stones and pieces of timber only showed that the work had been abandoned almost as soon as begun. To add to his consternation, the general observed that the sides of the causeway in this neighborhood had been pared off, and, as was evident, very recently. He saw in all this the artifice of the cunning enemy; and had little doubt that his hot-headed officer had rushed into a snare deliberately laid for him. Deeply alarmed, he set about repairing the mischief as fast as possible, by ordering his men to fill up the yawning chasm.

But they had scarcely begun their labors, when the hoarse echoes of conflict in the distance were succeeded by a hideous sound of mingled yells and war-whoops, that seemed to rend the very heavens. This was followed by a rushing noise, as of the tread of thronging multitudes, showing that the tide of battle was turned back from its former course, and was rolling on towards the spot where Cortés and his little band of cavaliers were planted.

His conjecture proved too true. Alderete had followed the retreating Aztecs with an eagerness which increased with every step of his advance. He had carried the barricades, which had defended the breach, without much difficulty, and, as he swept on, gave orders that the opening should be stopped. But the blood of the high-spirited cavaliers was warmed by the chase, and no one cared to be detained by the ignoble occupation of filling up the ditches, while he could gather laurels so easily in the fight; and they all pressed on, exhorting and cheering one another with the assurance of being the first to reach the square of Tlatelolco. In this way they suffered themselves to be decoyed into the heart of the city; when suddenly the horn of Guatemozin[27]—the sacred symbol, heard only in seasons of extraordinary peril—sent forth a long and piercing note from the summit of a neighboring *teocalli.*[28] In an instant, the flying Aztecs, as if maddened by the blast, wheeled about, and turned on their pursuers. At the same time, countless swarms of warriors from the adjoining streets and lanes poured in upon the flanks of the assailants, filling the air with the fierce, unearthly cries which had reached the ears of Cortés, and drowning, for a moment, the wild dissonance which reigned in the other quarters of the capital.

The army, taken by surprise, and shaken by the fury of the assault, were thrown into the utmost disorder. Friends and foes, white men and Indians, were mingled together in one promiscuous mass. Spears, swords, and war-clubs were brandished together in the air. Blows fell at random. In their eagerness to escape, they trod down one another. Blinded by the missiles, which now rained on them from the *azoteas*,[29] they staggered on, scarcely knowing in what direction, or fell, struck down by hands which they could not see. On they came like a rushing torrent sweeping along some steep declivity, and rolling in one confused tide towards the open breach, on the further side of which stood Cortés and his companions, horror-struck at the sight of the approaching ruin. The foremost files soon plunged into the gulf, treading one another under the flood, some striving ineffectually to swim, others, with more success, to clamber over the heaps of their suffocated comrades. Many, as they attempted to scale the opposite sides of the slippery dike, fell into the water, or were hurried off by the warriors in the canoes, who added to the horrors of the rout by the fresh storm of darts and javelins, which they poured on the fugitives.

Cortés, meanwhile, with his brave followers, kept his station undaunted on the other side of the breach. "I had made up my mind," he says, "to die, rather than desert my poor followers in their extremity." With outstretched hands he endeavoured to rescue as many as he could from the watery grave, and from the more appalling fate of captivity. He as vainly tried to restore something like presence of mind and order among the distracted fugitives. His person was too well known to the Aztecs, and his position now made him a conspicuous mark for their weapons. Darts, stones, and arrows fell around him thick as hail, but glanced harmless from his steel helmet and armor of proof. At length a cry of "Malinche,"[30] "Malinche," arose among the enemy; and six of their number, strong and athletic warriors, rushing on him at once, made a violent effort to drag him on board their boat. In the struggle he received a severe wound in the leg, which, for the time, disabled it. There seemed to be no hope for him; when a faithful follower, Christóval de Olea, perceiving his general's extremity, threw himself on the Aztecs, and with a blow cut off the arm of one savage, and then plunged his sword in the body of another. He was quickly supported by a comrade named Lerma, and by a Tlascalan chief, who, fighting over the prostrate body of Cortés, despatched three more of the assailants, though the heroic Olea paid dearly for his self-devotion, as he fell mortally wounded by the side of his general.

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[27] Montezuma's nephew and successor.
[28] temple
[29] Flat roofs of houses.

The report soon spread among the soldiers, that their commander was taken; and Quiñones, the captain of his guard, with several others, pouring in to the rescue, succeeded in disentangling Cortés from the grasp of his enemies who were struggling with him in the water, and, raising him in their arms, placed him again on the causeway. One of his pages, meanwhile, had advanced some way through the press, leading a horse for his master to mount. But the youth received a wound in the throat from a javelin, which prevented him from effecting his object. Another of his attendants was more successful. It was Guzman, his chamberlain; but, as he held the bridle, while Cortés was assisted into the saddle, he was snatched away by the Aztecs, and, with the swiftness of thought, hurried off by their canoes. The general still lingered, unwilling to leave the spot, while his presence could be of the least service. But the faithful Quiñones, taking his horse by the bridle, turned his head from the breach, exclaiming at the same time, that 'his master's life was too important to the army to be thrown away there.'

Yet it was no easy matter to force a passage through the press. The surface of the causeway, cut up by the feet of men and horses, was knee-deep in mud, and in some parts was so much broken, that the water from the canals flowed over it. The crowded mass, in their efforts to extricate themselves from their perilous position, staggered to and fro like a drunken man. Those on the flanks were often forced by the lateral pressure of their comrades down the slippery sides of the dike, where they were picked up by the canoes of the enemy, whose shouts of triumph proclaimed the savage joy with which they gathered in every new victim for the sacrifice. Two cavaliers, riding by the general's side, lost their footing, and rolled down the declivity into the water. One was taken and his horse killed. The other was happy enough to escape. The valiant ensign, Corral, had a similar piece of good fortune. He slipped into the canal, and the enemy felt sure of their prize, when he again succeeded in recovering the causeway with the tattered banner of Castile still flying above his head. The barbarians set up a cry of disappointed rage, as they lost possession of a trophy, to which the people of Anahuac attached, as we have seen, the highest importance, hardly inferior in their eyes to the capture of the commander-in-chief himself.

Cortés at length succeeded in regaining the firm ground, and reaching the open place before the great street of Tacuba. Here, under a sharp fire of the artillery, he rallied his broken squadrons, and, charging at the head of the little body of horse, which, not having been brought into action, were still fresh, he beat off the enemy. He then commanded the retreat of the two other divisions. The scattered forces again united; and the general, sending forward his Indian confederates, took the rear with a chosen body of cavalry to cover the retreat of the army, which was effected with but little additional loss.

Andres de Tapia was despatched to the western causeway to acquaint Alvarado and Sandoval with the failure of the enterprise. Meanwhile the two captains had penetrated far into the city. Cheered by the triumphant shouts of their countrymen in the adjacent streets, they had pushed on with extraordinary vigor, that they might not be outstripped in the race of glory. They had almost reached the market-place, which lay nearer to their quarters than to the general's, when they heard the blast from the dread horn of Guatemozin, followed by the overpowering yell of the barbarians, which had so startled the ears of Cortés; till at length the sounds of the receding conflict died away in the distance. The two captains now understood that the day must have gone hard with their countrymen. They soon had further proof of it, when the victorious Aztecs, returning from the pursuit of Cortés joined their forces to those engaged with Sandoval and Alvarado, and fell on them with redoubled fury. At the same time they rolled on the ground two or three of the bloody heads of the Spaniards, shouting the name of "Malinche." The captains, struck with horror at the spectacle,—though they gave little credit to the words of the enemy,—instantly ordered a retreat. Indeed, it was not in their power to maintain their ground against the furious assaults of the besieged, who poured on them, swarm after swarm, with a desperation, of which, says one who was there, "although it seems as if it were now present to my eyes, I can give but a faint idea to the reader. God alone could have brought us off safe from the perils of that day." The fierce barbarians followed up the Spaniards to their very intrenchments. But here they were met, first by the cross fire of the brigantines, which, dashing through the palisades planted to obstruct their movements, completely enfiladed the causeway, and next by that of the small battery erected in front of the camp, which, under the management of a skillful engineer, named Medrano, swept the whole length of the defile. Thus galled in front and on flank, the shattered columns of the Aztecs were compelled to give way and take shelter under the defenses of the city.

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[30] A popular Aztec name which had been conferred upon Cortés.

The greatest anxiety now prevailed in the camp, regarding the fate of Cortés; for Tapia had been detained on the road by scattered parties of the enemy, whom Guatemozin had stationed there to interrupt the communications between the camps. He arrived, at length, however, though bleeding from several wounds. His intelligence, while it reassured the Spaniards as to the general's personal safety, was not calculated to allay their uneasiness in other respects.

Sandoval, in particular, was desirous to acquaint himself with the actual state of things, and the further intentions of Cortés. Suffering as he was from three wounds, which he had received in that day's fight, he resolved to visit in person the quarters of the commander-in-chief. It was mid-day,—for the busy scenes of the morning had occupied but a few hours,—when Sandoval remounted the good steed, on whose strength and speed he knew he could rely. It was a noble animal, well-known throughout the army, and worthy of its gallant rider, whom it had carried safe through all the long marches and bloody battles of the conquest. On the way he fell in with Guatemozin's scouts, who gave him chase, and showered around him volleys of missiles, which fortunately found no vulnerable point in his own harness, or that of his well-barbed charger.

On arriving at the camp, he found the troops there much worn and dispirited by the disaster of the morning. They had good reason to be so. Besides the killed, and a long file of wounded, sixty-two Spaniards, with a multitude of allies, had fallen alive into the hands of the enemy,—an enemy who was never known to spare a captive. The loss of two field-pieces and seven horses crowned their own disgrace and the triumphs of the Aztecs. This loss, so insignificant in European warfare, was a great one here, where both horses and artillery, the most powerful arms of war against the barbarians, were not to be procured without the greatest cost and difficulty.

Cortés, it was observed, had borne himself throughout this trying day with his usual intrepidity and coolness. The only time he was seen to falter was when the Mexicans threw down before him the heads of several Spaniards, shouting, at the same time, "Sandoval," "Tonatiuh," the well-known epithet of Alvarado. At the sight of the gory trophies, he grew deadly pale,—but, in a moment recovering his usual confidence, he endeavored to cheer up the drooping spirits of his followers. It was with a cheerful countenance, that he now received his lieutenant; but a shade of sadness was visible through this outward composure, showing how the catastrophe of the *puente cuidada,* "the sorrowful bridge," as he mournfully called it, lay heavy at his heart.

To the cavalier's anxious inquiries, as to the cause of the disaster, he replied: "It is for my sins, that it has befallen me, son Sandoval"; for such was the affectionate epithet with which Cortés often addressed his best-beloved and trusty officer. He then explained to him the immediate cause, in the negligence of the treasurer. Further conversation followed, in which the general declared his purpose to forgo active hostilities for a few days. "You must take my place," he continued, "for I am too much crippled at present to discharge my duties. You must watch over the safety of the camps. Give especial heed to Alvarado's. He is a gallant soldier, I know it well; but I doubt the Mexican hounds may, some hour, take him at disadvantage." These few words showed the general's own estimate of his two lieutenants; both equally brave and chivalrous; but the one uniting with these qualities the circumspection so essential to success in perilous enterprises, in which the other was signally deficient. The future conqueror of Guatemala had to gather wisdom, as usual, from the bitter fruits of his own errors. It was under the training of Cortés that he learned to be a soldier.—The general, having concluded his instructions, affectionately embraced his lieutenant, and dismissed him to his quarters.

It was late in the afternoon when he reached them; but the sun was still lingering above the western hills, and poured his beams wide over the Valley, lighting up the old towers and temples of Tenochtitlan with a mellow radiance, that little harmonized with the dark scenes of strife, in which the city had so lately been involved. The tranquillity of the hour, however, was, on a sudden, broken by the strange sounds of the great drum in the temple of the war-god,—sounds which recalled the *noche triste*,[31] with all its terrible images, to the minds of the Spaniards, for that was the only occasion on which they had ever heard them. They intimated some solemn act of religion within the unhallowed precincts of the *teocalli;* and the soldiers, startled by the mournful vibrations, which might be heard for leagues across the Valley, turned their eyes to the quarter whence they proceeded. They there beheld a long procession winding up the huge sides of the pyramid; for the camp of Alvarado was pitched scarcely a mile from the city, and objects are distinctly visible, at a great distance, in the transparent atmosphere of the table-land.

As the long file of priests and warriors reached the flat summit of the *teocalli*, the Spaniards saw the figures of several men stripped to their waists, some of whom, by the whiteness of their skins, they recognized as their own countrymen. They were the victims for sacrifice. Their heads were gaudily decorated with coronals of plumes, and they carried fans in their hands. They were urged along by blows, and compelled to take part in the dances in honor of the Aztec war-god. The unfortunate captives, then stripped of their sad finery, were stretched, one after another, on the great stone of sacrifice. On its convex surface, their breasts were heaved up conveniently, for the diabolical purpose of the priestly executioner, who cut asunder the ribs by a strong blow with his sharp razor of *itztli*,[32] and, thrusting his hand into the wound, tore away the heart, which, hot and reeking, was deposited on the golden censer before the idol. The body of the slaughtered victim was then hurled down the steep stairs of the pyramid, which, it may be remembered, were placed at the same angle of the pile, one flight below another; and the mutilated remains were gathered up by the savages beneath, who soon prepared with them the cannibal repast which completed the work of abomination!

We may imagine with what sensations the stupefied Spaniards must have gazed on this horrid spectacle, so near that they could almost recognize the persons of their unfortunate friends, see the struggles and writhing of their bodies, hear—or fancy that they heard—their screams of agony! yet so far removed, that they could render them no assistance. Their limbs trembled beneath them, as they thought what might one day be their own fate; and the bravest among them, who had hitherto gone to battle, as careless and light-hearted as to the banquet or the ball-room, were unable, from this time forward, to encounter their ferocious enemy without a sickening feeling, much akin to fear, coming over them.

Such was not the effect produced by this spectacle on the Mexican forces, gathered at the end of the causeway. Like vultures maddened by the smell of distant carrion, they set up a piercing cry, and as they shouted that 'such should be the fate of all their enemies,' swept along in one fierce torrent over the dike. But the Spaniards were not to be taken by surprise; and, before the barbarian horde had come within their lines, they opened such a deadly fire from their battery of heavy guns, supported by the musketry and crossbows, that the assailants were compelled to fall back slowly, but fearfully mangled, to their former position.[33]

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1838-1843 1843

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[31] "The melancholy night" when Cortés was driven from the City of Mexico—July 1, 1520.

[32] Elsewhere, Prescott explains this word as "obsidian, a dark, transparent mineral, exceedingly hard." It is really a volcanic glass.

[33] The story of the remainder of the three months' siege, given in the two following chapters, is one of famine and torture almost too terrible to be believed. Cortés was at length victorious and took possession of what remained of the City of Mexico on Aug. 13, 1521.

GEORGE TICKNOR

Born, Boston, 1791, died there, 1871. Ticknor graduated from Dartmouth College 1807, was admitted to the bar, but turned to literature and studied in Germany 1815 to 1819. He was professor of modern languages and literature, Harvard, 1819 to 1835, when he again went abroad to study; he was the earliest American literary scholar and scholarly critic. His *History of Spanish Literature* appeared in 1849, and his *Life of William Hickling Prescott* in 1864.

HISTORY OF SPANISH LITERATURE

From Volume II, Chapters X and XII

[*Cervantes and Don Quixote*][1]

The family of Cervantes was originally Galician,[2] and, at the time of his birth, not only numbered five hundred years of nobility and public service, but was spread throughout Spain, and had been extended to Mexico and other parts of America. The Castilian branch, which, in the fifteenth century became connected by marriage with the Saavedras, seems, early in the sixteenth, to have fallen off in its fortunes; and we know that the parents of Miguel, who has given to the race a splendor which has saved its old nobility from oblivion, were poor inhabitants of Alcalá de Henares, a small but flourishing city, about twenty miles from Madrid. There he was born, the youngest of four children, on one of the early days of October, 1547.

No doubt he received his early education in the place of his nativity, then in the flush of its prosperity and fame from the success of the university founded there by Cardinal Ximenes, about fifty years before. At any rate, like many other generous spirits, he has taken an obvious delight in recalling the days of his childhood in different parts of his works; as in his Don Quixote, where he alludes to the burial and enchantments of the famous Moor Muzaraque on the great hill of Zulema, just as he had probably heard them in some nursery story; and in his prose pastoral, *Galatea*,[3] where he arranges the scene of some of its most graceful adventures "on the banks," as he fondly calls it, "of the famous Henares." But concerning his youth we know only what he incidentally tells us himself;—that he took great pleasure in attending the theatrical representations of Lope de Rueda;[4] that he wrote verses when very young; and that he always read everything within his reach, even, as it should seem, the torn scraps of paper he picked up in the public streets.

It has been conjectured that he pursued his studies in part at Madrid, and there is some probability, notwithstanding the poverty of his family, that he passed two years at the University of Salamanca. But what is certain is, that he obtained a public and decisive mark of respect, before he was twenty-two years old, from one of his teachers; for, in 1569, Lope de Hoyos published, by authority, on the death of the unhappy Isabelle de Valois, wife of Philip the Second, a volume of verse, in which, among other contributions of his pupils, are six short poems by Cervantes, whom he calls his "dear and well-beloved disciple." This was, no doubt, Cervantes's first appearance in print as an author; and though he gives in it little proof of poetical talent, yet the affectionate words of his master by which his verses were accompanied, and the circumstance that one of his elegies was written in the name of the whole school, show that he enjoyed the respect of his teacher and the good-will of his fellow-students.

The next year, 1570, we find him, without any notice of the cause, removed from all his early connections, and serving at Rome as chamberlain in the household of Monsignor Aquaviva, soon afterwards a cardinal; the same person who had been sent, in 1568, on a special mission from the Pope to Philip the Second, and who, as he seems to have had a regard for literature and for men of letters, may, on his return to Italy, have taken Cervantes with him from interest in his talents. The term of service of the young man must, however, have been short. Perhaps he was too much of a Spaniard, and had too proud a spirit, to remain long in a position at best very equivocal, and that, too, at a period when the world was full of solicitations to adventure and military glory.

But, whatever may have been his motive, he soon left Rome and its court. In 1571, the Pope, Philip the Second, and the state of Venice concluded what was called a "Holy League" against the Turks, and set on foot a joint armament, commanded by the chivalrous Don John of Austria,[5] a natural son of Charles the Fifth. The temptations of such a romantic, as well as imposing, expedition against the ancient oppressor of whatever was Spanish, and the formidable enemy of all Christendom, were more than Cervantes, at the age of twenty-three, could resist; and the next thing we hear of him is, that he had volunteered in it as a common soldier. For, as he says in a work written just before his death, he had always observed "that none make better soldiers than those who are transplanted from the region of letters to the fields of war, and that never scholar became soldier that was not a good and brave one." Animated with this spirit, he entered the service of his country among the troops with which Spain then filled a large part of Italy, and continued in it till he was honorably discharged in 1575.

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[1] Miguel de Cervantes-Saavedra, the great Spanish novelist and poet, who died on the same day as did Shakspere, April 23, 1616, is best known as the author of the brilliant satirical romance *Don Quixote*.

[2] Galicia is the northwestern province of Spain.

[3] An unfinished work in two volumes which Cervantes apparently believed to be one of his best writings.

[4] A mechanic of Seville, one of the first Spanish writers of the comedy of manners, and founder of the Spanish drama, c. 1510-c. 1565.

During these four or five years he learned many of the hardest lessons of life. He was present in the sea-fight of Lepanto,[6] October 7, 1571, and, though suffering at the time under a fever, insisted on bearing his part in that great battle, which first decisively arrested the intrusion of the Turks into the West of Europe. The galley in which he served was in the thickest of the contest, and that he did his duty to his country and to Christendom he carried proud and painful proof to his grave; for, besides two other wounds, he received one which deprived him of the use of his left hand and arm during the rest of his life. With the other sufferers in the fight, he was taken to the hospital at Messina, where he remained till April, 1572; and then, under Mark Antonio Colonna, went on the expedition to the Levant, to which he alludes with so much satisfaction in his dedication of the *Galatea,* and which he has so well described in the story of the Captive in *Don Quixote.*

The next year, 1573, he was in the affair of the Goleta at Tunis, under Don John of Austria, and afterwards, with the regiment to which he was attached, returned to Sicily and Italy, many parts of which, in different journeys or expeditions, he seems to have visited, remaining at one time in Naples above a year. This period of his life, however, though marked with much suffering, seems never to have been regarded by him with regret. On the contrary, above forty years afterwards, with a generous pride in what he had undergone, he declared that, if the alternative were again offered him, he should account his wounds a cheap exchange for the glory of having been present in that great enterprise.[7]

When he was discharged, in 1575, he took with him letters from the Duke of Sesa and Don John, commending him earnestly to the King, and embarked for Spain. But on the twenty-sixth of September he was captured and carried into Algiers, where he passed five years yet more disastrous and more full of adventure than the five preceding. He served successively three cruel masters,—a Greek and a Venetian, both renegadoes, and the Dey, or King, himself; the first two tormenting him with that peculiar hatred against Christians which naturally belonged to persons who, from unworthy motives, had joined themselves to the enemies of all Christendom; and the last, the Dey, claiming him for his slave, and treating him with great severity, because he had fled from his master and become formidable by a series of efforts to obtain liberty for himself and his fellow-captives.

Indeed, it is plain that the spirit of Cervantes, so far from having been broken by his cruel captivity, had been only raised and strengthened by it. On one occasion he attempted to escape by land to Oran, a Spanish settlement on the coast, but was deserted by his guide and compelled to return. On another, he secreted thirteen fellow-sufferers in a cave on the sea-shore, where, at the constant risk of his own life, he provided during many weeks for their daily wants, while waiting for rescue by sea; but at last, after he had joined them, was basely betrayed, and then nobly took the whole punishment of the conspiracy on himself. Once he sent for help to break forth by violence, and his letter was intercepted; and once he had matured a scheme for being rescued, with sixty of his countrymen,—a scheme of which, when it was defeated by treachery, he again announced himself as the only author and the willing victim. And finally, he had a grand project for the insurrection of all the Christian slaves in Algiers, which was, perhaps, not unlikely to succeed, as their number was full twenty-five thousand, and which was certainly so alarming to the Dey, that he declared that, 'If he could but keep that lame Spaniard well guarded, he should consider his capital, his slaves, and his galleys safe.' On each of these occasions, severe, but not degrading, punishments were inflicted upon him. Four times he expected instant death in the awful form of impalement or of fire; and the last time a rope was absolutely put about his neck, in the vain hope of extorting from a spirit so lofty the names of his accomplices.

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[5] He was, therefore, half brother of Philip II., who had inherited Spain from Charles V.

[6] A town on the coast of Greece near which the Turks were defeated by a fleet of the "Holy League" under Don John.

[7] The operations of the "Holy League."

At last, the moment of release came. His elder brother, who was captured with him, had been ransomed three years before; and now his widowed mother was obliged to sacrifice, for her younger son's freedom, all the pittance that remained to her in the world, including the dowry of her daughters. But even this was not enough; and the remainder of the poor five hundred crowns that were demanded as the price of his liberty was made up partly by small borrowings, and partly by the contributions of religious charity. In this way he was ransomed on the nineteenth of September, 1580, just at the moment when he had embarked with his master, the Dey, for Constantinople, whence his rescue would have been all but hopeless. A short time afterward he left Algiers, where we have abundant proof that, by his disinterestedness, his courage, and his fidelity, he had, to an extraordinary degree, gained the affection and respect of the multitude of Christian captives with which that city of anathemas was then crowded.

But, though he was thus restored to his home and his country, and though his first feelings may have been as fresh and happy as those he has so eloquently expressed more than once when speaking of the joys of freedom, still it should be remembered that he returned after an absence of ten years, beginning at a period of life when he could hardly have taken root in society, or made for himself, amidst its struggling interests, a place which would not be filled almost as soon as he left it. His father was dead. His family, poor before, had been reduced to a still more bitter poverty by his own ransom and that of his brother. He was unfriended and unknown, and must have suffered naturally and deeply from a sort of grief and disappointment which he had felt neither as a soldier nor as a slave. It is not remarkable, therefore, that he should have entered anew into the service of his country,—joining his brother, probably in the same regiment to which he had formerly belonged, and which was now sent to maintain the Spanish authority in the newly acquired kingdom of Portugal. How long he remained there is not certain. But he was at Lisbon, and went, under the Marquis of Santa Cruz, in the expedition of 1581, as well as in the more important one of the year following, to reduce the Azores, which still held out against the arms of Philip the Second. From this period, therefore, we are to date the full knowledge he frequently shows of Portuguese literature, and that strong love for Portugal which, in the third book of *Persiles and Sigismunda,* as well as in other parts of his works, he exhibits with a kindliness and generosity remarkable in a Spaniard of any age, and particularly in one of the age of Philip the Second.[8]

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. . . When Cervantes began to write it [*Don Quixote*] is wholly uncertain. For twenty years preceding the appearance of the First Part he printed nothing; and the little we know of him during that long and dreary period of his life shows only how he obtained a hard subsistence for himself and his family by common business agencies, which, we have reason to suppose, were generally of trifling importance, and which, we are sure, were sometimes distressing in their consequences. The tradition, therefore, of his persecutions in La Mancha, and his own averment that the *Don Quixote* was begun in a prison, are all the hints we have received concerning the circumstances under which it was first imagined; and that such circumstances should have tended to such a result is a striking fact in the history, not only of Cervantes, but of the human mind, and shows how different was his temperament from that commonly found in men of genius.

His purpose in writing the *Don Quixote* has sometimes been enlarged by the ingenuity of a refined criticism, until it has been made to embrace the whole of the endless contrast between the poetical and the prosaic in our natures,[9]—between heroism and generosity on one side, as if they were mere illusions, and a cold selfishness on the other, as if it were the truth and reality of life. But this is a metaphysical conclusion drawn from views of the work at once imperfect and exaggerated; a conclusion contrary to the spirit of the age, which was not given to a satire so philosophical and generalizing, and contrary to the character of Cervantes himself, as we follow it from the time when he first became a soldier, through all his trials in Algiers, and down to the moment when his warm and trusting heart dictated the Dedication of *Persiles and Sigismunda* to the Count de Lemos. His whole spirit, indeed, seems rather to have been filled with a cheerful confidence in human virtue, and his whole bearing in life seems to have been a contradiction to that discouraging and saddening scorn for whatever is elevated and generous, which such an interpretation of the *Don Quixote* necessarily implies.

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[8] There follows a somewhat detailed account of Cervantes's writings and of his later life.

[9] Compare modern interpretations of *Hamlet* which, very possibly, attribute to the play far more than ever entered Shakspere's mind.

Nor does he himself permit us to give to his romance any such secret meaning; for, at the very beginning of the work, he announces it to be his sole purpose to break down the vogue and authority of books of chivalry,[10] and, at the end of the whole, he declares anew, in his own person, that 'he had had no other desire than to render abhorred of men the false and absurd stories contained in books of chivalry'; exulting in his success, as an achievement of no small moment. And such, in fact, it was, for we have abundant proof that the fanaticism for these romances was so great in Spain, during the sixteenth century, as to have become matter of alarm to the more judicious. Many of the distinguished contemporary authors speak of its mischiefs, and among the rest, the venerable Luis de Granada and Malon de Chaide, who wrote the eloquent *Conversion of Mary Magdalen*. Guevara, the learned and fortunate courtier of Charles the Fifth, declares that 'men did read nothing in his time but such shameful books as *Amadis de Gaula, Tristan, Primaleon,* and the like'; the acute author[11] of *The Dialogue on Languages* says that 'the ten years he passed at court he wasted in studying *Florisando, Lisuarte, The Knight of the Cross,* and other such books, more than he can name'; and from different sources we know, what, indeed, we may gather from Cervantes himself, that many who read these fictions took them for true histories. At last they were deemed so noxious, that, in 1553, they were prohibited by law from being printed or sold in the American colonies,[12] and in 1555 the same prohibition, and even the burning of all copies of them extant in Spain itself, was earnestly asked for by the Cortés.[13] The evil, in fact, had become formidable, and the wise began to see it.

To destroy a passion that had struck its roots so deeply in the character of all classes of men, to break up the only reading which at that time could be considered widely popular and fashionable, was certainly a bold undertaking, and one that marks anything rather than a scornful or broken spirit, or a want of faith in what is most to be valued in our common nature. The great wonder is, that Cervantes succeeded. But that he did, there is no question. No book of chivalry was written after the appearance of *Don Quixote,* in 1605; and from the same date, even those already enjoying the greatest favor ceased, with one or two unimportant exceptions, to be reprinted; so that, from that time to the present, they have been constantly disappearing, until they are now among the rarest of literary curiosities;—a solitary instance of the power of genius to destroy, by a single well-timed blow, an entire department, and that, too, a flourishing and favored one, in the literature of a great and proud nation.

The general plan Cervantes adopted to accomplish this object, without, perhaps, foreseeing its whole course, and still less all its results, was simple as well as original. In 1605, he published the First Part of *Don Quixote,* in which a country gentleman of La Mancha—full of genuine Castilian honor and enthusiasm, gentle and dignified in his character, trusted by his friends, and loved by his dependents—is represented as so completely crazed by long reading the most famous books of chivalry, that he believes them to be true, and feels himself called on to become the impossible knight-errant they describe,—nay, actually goes forth into the world to defend the oppressed and avenge the injured, like the heroes of his romances.

To complete his chivalrous equipment—which he had begun by fitting up for himself a suit of armor strange to his century—he took an esquire[14] out of his neighborhood; a middle-aged peasant, ignorant and credulous to excess, but of great good-nature; a glutton and a liar; selfish and gross, yet attached to his master; shrewd enough occasionally to see the folly of their position, but always amusing, and sometimes mischievous, in his interpretations of it. These two sally forth from their native village in search of adventures, of which the excited imagination of the knight, turning windmills into giants, solitary inns into castles, and galley-slaves into oppressed gentlemen, finds abundance, wherever he goes; while the esquire translates them all into the plain prose of truth with an admirable simplicity, quite unconscious of its own humor, and rendered the more striking by its contrast with the lofty and courteous dignity and magnificent illusions of the superior personage. There could, of course, be but one consistent termination to adventures like these. The knight and his esquire suffer a series of ridiculous discomfitures, and are at last brought home, like madmen, to their native village, where Cervantes leaves them, with an intimation that the story of their adventures is by no means ended.

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[10] Much of the best romance of the world is derived in part from tales which in the twelfth century and later clustered around Charlemagne, the legendary Arthurian figures, Tristan, and other Celtic heroes. In the following centuries, however, the decline of chivalry was reflected in many far-fetched and unreal stories. Of these *Amadis de Gaula* was probably the best, and almost countless versions and imitations followed it. But the absurdity and unreality of the belated cult of chivalry, Cervantes unsparingly satirized.

[11] Juan de Valdes, 1500-1541.

[12] The currency of these romances in the Spanish colonies is interesting evidence of the difference between Spanish culture and English culture in America.

[13] The national assembly of Spain.

[14] Sancho Panza, the faithful servant and companion of Don Quixote.

From this time we hear little of Cervantes and nothing of his hero, till eight years afterwards, in July, 1613, when he wrote the Preface to his Tales, where he distinctly announces a Second Part of *Don Quixote*.

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This latter half of *Don Quixote* is a contradiction of the proverb Cervantes cites in it,—that second parts were never yet good for much. It is, in fact, better than the first. It shows more freedom and vigor; and if the caricature is sometimes pushed to the very verge of what is permitted, the invention, the style of thought, and, indeed, the materials throughout, are richer and the finish is more exact. The character of Samson Carrasco, for instance, is a very happy, though somewhat bold, addition to the original persons of the drama; and the adventures at the castle of the Duke and Duchess, where Don Quixote is fooled to the top of his bent; the managements of Sancho as governor of his island; the visions and dreams of the cave of Montesinos; the scenes with Roque Guinart, the freebooter, and with Gines de Passamonte, the galley-slave and puppet-show man; together with the mock-heroic hospitalities of Don Antonio Moreno at Barcelona, and the final defeat of the knight there, are all admirable. In truth, everything in this Second Part, especially its general outline and tone, shows that time and a degree of success he had not before known had ripened and perfected the strong manly sense and sure insight into human nature which are visible everywhere in the works of Cervantes, and which here become a part, as it were, of his peculiar genius, whose foundations had been laid, dark and deep, amidst the trials and sufferings of his various life.

But throughout both parts, Cervantes shows the impulses and instincts of an original power with most distinctness in his development of the characters of Don Quixote and Sancho, character in whose contrast and opposition is hidden the full spirit of his peculiar humor, and no small part of what is most characteristic of the entire fiction. They are his prominent personages. He delights, therefore, to have them as much as possible in the front of his scene. They grow visibly upon his favor as he advances, and the fondness of his liking for them makes him constantly produce them in lights and relations as little foreseen by himself as they are by his readers. The knight, who seems to have been originally intended for a parody of the *Amadis,* becomes gradually a detached, separate, and wholly independent personage, into whom is infused so much of a generous and elevated nature, such gentleness and delicacy, such a pure sense of honor, and such a warm love for whatever is noble and good, that we feel almost the same attachment to him that the barber and the curate did, and are almost as ready as his family was to mourn over his death.

The case of Sancho is again very similar, and perhaps in some respects stronger. At first, he is introduced as the opposite of Don Quixote, and used merely to bring out his master's peculiarities in a more striking relief. It is not until we have gone through nearly half of the First Part that he utters one of those proverbs which form afterwards the staple of his conversation and humor; and it is not till the opening of the Second Part, and, indeed, not till he comes forth, in all his mingled shrewdness and credulity, as governor of Barataria, that his character is quite developed and completed to the full measure of its grotesque, yet congruous, proportions. . . . . .

Cervantes, in truth, came at last to love these creations of his marvelous power, as if they were real, familiar personages, and to speak of them and treat them with an earnestness and interest that tend much to the illusion of his readers. Both Don Quixote and Sancho are thus brought before us like such living realities, that, at this moment, the figures of the crazed, gaunt, dignified knight and of his round, selfish, and most amusing esquire dwell bodied forth in the imaginations of more, among all conditions of men throughout Christendom, than any other of the creations of human talent. The greatest of the great poets—Homer, Dante, Shakspere, Milton—have no doubt risen to loftier heights, and placed themselves in more imposing relations with the noblest attributes of our nature; but Cervantes—always writing under the unchecked impulse of his own genius, and instinctively concentrating in his fiction whatever was peculiar to the character of his nation—has shown himself of kindred to all times and all lands; to the humblest degrees of cultivation as well as to the highest; and has thus, beyond all other writers, received in return a tribute of sympathy and admiration from the universal spirit of humanity.

It is not easy to believe, that, when he had finished such a work, he was insensible to what he had done. Indeed, there are passages in the *Don Quixote* itself which prove a consciousness of his own genius, its aspirations, and its power. And yet there are, on the other hand, carelessnesses, blemishes, and contradictions scattered through it, which seem to show him to have been almost indifferent to contemporary success or posthumous fame. His plan, which he seems to have modified more than once while engaged in the composition of the work, is loose and disjointed; his style, though full of the richest idiomatic beauties, abounds with inaccuracies; and the facts and incidents that make up his fiction are full of anachronisms, which Los Rios, Pellicer, and Eximeno[15] have in vain endeavored to reconcile, either with the main current of the story itself, or with one another. Thus, in the First Part, Don Quixote is generally represented as belonging to a remote age, and his history is supposed to have been written by an ancient Arabian author; while, in the examination of his library, he is plainly contemporary with Cervantes himself, and, after his defeats, is brought home confessedly in the year 1604. To add further to this confusion, when we reach the Second Part, which opens only a month after the conclusion of the First, and continues only a few weeks, we have, at the side of the same claims of an ancient Arabian author, a conversation about the expulsion of the Moors,[16] which happened after 1609, and a criticism on Avellaneda, whose work was published in 1614.

But this is not all. As if still further to accumulate contradictions and incongruities, the very details of the story he has invented are often in whimsical conflict with each other, as well as with the historical facts to which they allude. Thus, on one occasion, the scenes which he had represented as having occurred in the course of a single evening and the following morning are said to have occupied two days; on another, he sets a company down to a late supper, and after conversations and stories that must have carried them nearly through the night, he says, "It began to draw towards evening." In different places he calls the same individual by different names, and—what is rather amusing—once reproaches Avellaneda with a mistake which was, after all, his own. And finally, having discovered the inconsequence of saying seven times that Sancho was on his mule after Gines de Passamonte had stolen it, he took pains, in the only edition of the First Part that he ever revised, to correct two of his blunders,—heedlessly overlooking the rest; and when he published the Second Part, laughed heartily at the whole,—the errors, the corrections, and all,—as things of little consequence to himself or anybody else.

The romance, however, which he threw so carelessly from him, and which, I am persuaded, he regarded rather as a bold effort to break up the absurd taste of his time for the fancies of chivalry than as anything of more serious import, has been established by an uninterrupted, and, it may be said, an unquestioned, success ever since, both as the oldest classical specimen of romantic fiction, and as one of the most remarkable monuments of modern genius. But though this may be enough to fill the measure of human fame and glory, it is not all to which Cervantes is entitled; for, if we would do him the justice that would have been dearest to his own spirit, and even if we would ourselves fully comprehend and enjoy the whole of his *Don Quixote,* we should, as we read it, bear in mind, that this delightful romance was not the result of a youthful exuberance of feeling and a happy external condition, nor composed in his best years, when the spirits of its author were light and his hopes high; but that—with all its unquenchable and irresistible humor, with its bright views of the world, and its cheerful trust in goodness and virtue—it was written in his old age, at the conclusion of a life nearly every step of which had been marked with disappointed expectations, disheartening struggles, and sore calamities; that he began it in a prison, and that it was finished when he felt the hand of death pressing heavy and cold upon his heart. If this be remembered as we read, we may feel, as we ought to feel, what admiration and reverence are due, not only to the living power of Don Quixote, but to the character and genius of Cervantes;—if it be forgotten or underrated, we shall fail in regard to both.

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[15] Biographers and critics of Cervantes.

[16] In 1609 the Moors, who had been conquered in 1492 but had continued to annoy the Spaniards by adhering to their own customs and religion, were expelled from the peninsula in a most cruel manner.

1838-1848 1849

GEORGE BANCROFT

Born, Worcester, Massachusetts, 1800, died, Washington, 1891. Bancroft was son of a Unitarian clergyman, graduated from Harvard, 1817, studied literature and history in Germany, and was instructor in Greek at Harvard, 1822. He became collector of the port of Boston, 1838, was candidate for governor of Massachusetts, 1844, secretary of the navy, 1844-1846, minister to England, 1846-1849, minister at Berlin, 1867-1874. His chief work was *The History of the United States,* 1834-1874 (revised 1884-1885). Other works are *History of the Formation of the Constitution of the United States,* 1882, and *Martin Van Buren,* 1889.

From HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

VOL. IV. CHAPTER VIII.

[*Acadia*[1]]

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At the North, New England was extending British dominion. Massachusetts cheerfully levied about seven thousand nine hundred men, or nearly one fifth of the able-bodied men in the colony. Of these, a detachment took part in establishing the sovereignty of England in Acadia. That peninsular region—abounding in harbors and in forests; rich in its ocean fisheries and in the product of its rivers; near to a continent that invited to the chase and the fur-trade; having, in its interior, large tracts of alluvial soil—had become dear to its inhabitants, who beheld around them the graves of their ancestors for several generations. It was the oldest French colony in North America. There the Bretons[2] had built their dwellings sixteen years before the Pilgrims reached the shores of New England. With the progress of the respective settlements, sectional jealousies and religious bigotry had renewed their warfare; the offspring of the Massachusetts husbandmen were taught to abhor "Popish cruelties" and "Popish superstitions"; while Roman Catholic missionaries persevered in propagating the faith of their church among the villages of the Abenakis.[3]

At last, after repeated conquests and restorations, the treaty of Utrecht conceded Acadia, or Nova Scotia, to Great Britain. Yet the name of Annapolis,[4] the presence of a feeble English garrison, and the emigration of hardly five or six English families, were nearly all that marked the supremacy of England. The old inhabitants remained on the soil which they had subdued, hardly conscious that they had changed their sovereign. They still loved the language and the usages of their forefathers, and their religion was graven upon their souls. They promised submission to England; but such was the love with which France had inspired them, they would not fight against its standard or renounce its name. Though conquered, they were French neutrals.

For nearly forty years from the peace of Utrecht they had been forgotten or neglected, and had prospered in their seclusion. No tax-gatherer counted their folds, no magistrate dwelt in their hamlets. The parish priest made their records and regulated their successions. Their little disputes were settled among themselves, with scarcely an instance of an appeal to English authority at Annapolis. The pastures were covered with their herds and flocks; and dikes, raised by extraordinary efforts of social industry, shut out the rivers and the tide from alluvial marshes of exuberant fertility. The meadows, thus reclaimed, were covered by richest grasses, or fields of wheat, that yielded fifty and thirty fold at the harvest. Their houses were built in clusters, neatly constructed and comfortably furnished, and around them all kinds of domestic fowls abounded. With the spinning-wheel and the loom, their women made, of flax from their own fields, of fleeces from their own flocks, coarse, but sufficient clothing. The few foreign luxuries that were coveted could be obtained from Annapolis or Louisburg, in return for furs, or wheat, or cattle.

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[1] In 1755, when the struggle began between France and England for the dominion of America, General Braddock planned four simultaneous expeditions against Niagara, Crown Point on Lake Champlain, Fort Duquesne on the present site of Pittsburgh, and Nova Scotia. After having been supplied by Franklin with wagons for his supplies (see p. 123) he had marched upon Fort Duquesne, but had in July been defeated and killed. An account of the rout of his forces is given in the previous part of this chapter. How the far more vulnerable small French forts in Nova Scotia, or Acadia as it was called by the French, had been in the meantime easily overcome in June, and how the Acadians were exiled the following September, is recounted in the selection that follows. Although originally settled by the French in 1604, Acadia, on the ground of its having been first visited by the Cabots in 1497, had been repeatedly claimed by the English. In 1621 the Virginia colonists conquered it; in 1654 Cromwell's forces invaded it. It was ceded to France by the treaty of Breda, in 1667; but in 1713 by the treaty of Utrecht the French gave up all claim to it. In 1749 French interest in Acadia again being manifested, the English renewed their efforts to colonize it. The sad sequel, found in the sufferings of the Acadians is vividly pictured by Bancroft.

[2] In Acadia the settlers were French. Cape Breton Island, northeast of Nova Scotia, may have been named after the Bretons, inhabitants of Brittany. The Acadians seem to have been called Bretons.

[3] A confederacy of northern Indians centering in Maine.

[4] Founded by the French in 1604 as Port Royal, but ceded to the British in 1713 and named for Queen Anne.

Thus were the Acadians happy in their neutrality and in the abundance which they drew from their native land. They formed, as it were, one great family. Their morals were of unaffected purity. Love was sanctified and calmed by the universal custom of early marriages. The neighbors of the community would assist the new couple to raise their cottage, while the wilderness offered land. Their numbers increased, and the colony, which had begun only as the trading station of a company, with a monopoly of the fur-trade, counted, perhaps, sixteen or seventeen thousand inhabitants.

When England began vigorously to colonize Nova Scotia, the native inhabitants might fear the loss of their independence. The enthusiasm of their priests was kindled into fervor at the thought that heretics, of a land which had disfranchised Catholics, were to surround, and perhaps to overwhelm, the ancient Acadians. "Better," said the priests, "surrender your meadows to the sea, and your houses to the flames, than, at the peril of your souls, take the oath of allegiance to the British government." And they, from their very simplicity and anxious sincerity, were uncertain in their resolves; now gathering courage to flee beyond the isthmus, for other homes in New France,[5] and now yearning for their own houses and fields, their herds and pastures.

The haughtiness of the British officers aided the priests in their attempts to foment disaffection. The English regarded colonies, even when settled by men from their own land, only as sources of emolument to the mother country; colonists as an inferior caste. The Acadians were despised because they were helpless. Ignorant of the laws of their conquerors, they were not educated to the knowledge, the defense, and the love of English liberties; they knew not the way to the throne, and, given up to military masters, had no redress in civil tribunals. Their papers and records, the titles to their estates and inheritances, were taken away from them. Was their property demanded for the public service? "they were not to be bargained with for the payment." The order may still be read on the Council records at Halifax. They must comply, it was written, without making any terms, "immediately," or "the next courier would bring an order for military execution upon the delinquents." And when they delayed in fetching firewood for their oppressors, it was told them from the governor, "If they do not do it in proper time, the soldiers shall absolutely take their houses for fuel." The unoffending sufferers submitted meekly to the tyranny. Under pretence of fearing that they might rise in behalf of France, or seek shelter in Canada, or convey provisions to the French garrisons, they were directed to surrender their boats and their firearms; and, conscious of innocence, they gave up their barges and their muskets, leaving themselves without the means of flight, and defenseless. Further orders were afterwards given to the English officers, if the Acadians behaved amiss to punish them at discretion; if the troops were annoyed, to inflict vengeance on the nearest, whether the guilty one or not,—"taking an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."

The French had yielded the sovereignty over no more than the peninsula. They established themselves on the isthmus in two forts,—one, a small stockade at the mouth of the little river Gaspereaux, near Bay Verde; the other, the more considerable fortress of Beau-Séjour, built and supplied at great expense, upon an eminence on the north side of the Messagouche, on the Bay of Fundy. The isthmus is here hardly fifteen miles wide, and formed the natural boundary between New France and Acadia.

The French at Beau-Séjour had passed the previous winter[6] in unsuspecting tranquillity, ignorant of the preparations of the two crowns for war. As spring approached, suspicions were aroused; but De Vergor, the inefficient commander, took no vigorous measures for strengthening his works, nor was he fully roused to his danger, till, from the walls of his fort, he himself beheld the fleet of the English sailing fearlessly into the bay, and anchoring before his eyes.

The provincial troops, about fifteen hundred in number, strengthened by a detachment of three hundred regulars and a train of artillery, were disembarked without difficulty. A day was given to repose and parade; on the fourth of June, they forced the passage of the Messagouche, the intervening river. No sally was attempted by De Vergor; no earnest defense was undertaken. On the twelfth, the fort at Beau-Séjour, weakened by fear, discord, and confusion, was invested, and in four days it surrendered. By the terms of the capitulation, the garrison was to be sent to Louisburg; for the Acadian fugitives, inasmuch as they had been forced into the service, amnesty was stipulated. The place received an English garrison, and, from the brother[7] of the king, then the soul of the regency, was named Cumberland.

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[5] A large part of what is now eastern Canada, including the St. Lawrence basin, the basin of the Great Lakes, Labrador, and part of Maine.

[6] 1754-1755

The petty fortress near the river Gaspereaux, on Bay Verde, a mere palisade, flanked by four blockhouses, without mound or trenches, and tenanted by no more than twenty soldiers, though commanded by the brave De Villerai, could do nothing but capitulate on the same terms. Meantime, Captain Rous sailed, with three frigates and a sloop, to reduce the French fort on the St. John's. But before he arrived there, the fort and dwellings of the French had been abandoned and burned, and he took possession of a deserted country. Thus was the region east of the St. Croix annexed to England with a loss of but twenty men killed, and as many more wounded.

No further resistance was to be feared. The Acadians cowered before their masters, hoping forbearance; willing to take an oath of fealty to England; in their single-mindedness and sincerity, refusing to pledge themselves to bear arms against France. The English were masters of the sea, were undisputed lords of the country, and could exercise clemency without apprehension. Not a whisper gave a warning of their purpose, till it was ripe for execution.

But it had been "determined upon" after the ancient device of Oriental despotism, that the French inhabitants of Acadia should be carried away into captivity to other parts of the British dominions. "They have laid aside all thought of taking the oaths of allegiance voluntarily"; thus in August, 1754, Lawrence, the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, had written of them to Lord Halifax. "They possess the best and largest tract of land in this province; if they refuse the oaths, it would be much better that they were away." The Lords of Trade[8] in reply veiled their wishes under the decorous form of suggestions. "By the treaty of Utrecht," said they of the French Acadians, "their becoming subjects of Great Britain is made an express condition of their continuance after the expiration of a year; they cannot become subjects but by taking the oaths required of subjects; and therefore it may be a question, whether their refusal to take such oaths will not operate to invalidate their titles to their lands. Consult the Chief Justice of Nova Scotia upon that point; his opinion may serve as a foundation for future measures."

France remembered the descendants of her sons in the hour of their affliction, and asked that they might have time to remove from the peninsula with their effects, leaving their lands to the English; but the answer of the British minister claimed them as useful subjects, and refused them the liberty of transmigration.

The inhabitants of Minas and the adjacent country pleaded with the British officers for the restitution of their boats and their guns, promising fidelity, if they could but retain their liberties, and declaring that not the want of arms, but their conscience, should engage them not to revolt. "The memorial," said Lawrence in Council, "is highly arrogant, insidious, and insulting." The memorialists, at his summons, came submissively to Halifax. "You want your canoes for carrying provisions to the enemy": said he to them, though he knew no enemy was left in their vicinity. "Guns are no part of your goods," he continued, "as by the laws of England all Roman Catholics are restrained from having arms, and are subject to penalties if arms are found in their houses. It is not the language of British subjects to talk of terms with the crown, or capitulate about their fidelity and allegiance. What excuse can you make for your presumption in treating this government with such indignity, as to expound to them the nature of fidelity? Manifest your obedience, by immediately taking the oaths of allegiance in the common form before the Council."

The deputies replied that they would do as the generality of the inhabitants should determine; and they merely entreated leave to return home and consult the body of their people.

The next day, the unhappy men, foreseeing the sorrows that menaced them, offered to swear allegiance unconditionally; but they were told that by a clause in a British statute persons who have once refused the oaths cannot be afterwards permitted to take them, but are to be considered as Popish Recusants;[9] and as such they were imprisoned.

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[7] An error; William, Duke of Cumberland, was the younger *son* of George II. and one of the sixteen that formed the regency during his father's absence on the continent.

[8] The familiar title for that standing committee of the privy council of England which had supervision of the colonies.

The Chief Justice, on whose opinion hung the fate of so many hundreds of innocent families, insisted that the French inhabitants were to be looked upon as confirmed "rebels"; who had now collectively and without exception become "recusants." Besides: they still counted in their villages "eight thousand" souls, and the English not more than "three thousand"; they stood in the way of "the progress of the settlement"; "by their non-compliance with the conditions of the treaty of Utrecht, they had forfeited their possessions to the crown"; after the departure "of the fleet and troops the province would not be in a condition to drive them out." "Such a juncture as the present might never occur"; so he advised "against receiving any of the French inhabitants to take the oath," and for the removal of "all" of them from the province.

That the cruelty might have no palliation, letters arrived leaving no doubt that the shores of the Bay of Fundy were entirely in the possession of the British; and yet at a council, at which Vice-Admiral Boscawen and the Rear-Admiral Mostyn were present by invitation, it was unanimously determined to send the French inhabitants out of the province; and after mature consideration it was further unanimously agreed that, to prevent their attempting to return and molest the settlers that may be set down on their lands, it would be most proper to distribute them amongst the several colonies on the continent.

To hunt them into the net was impracticable; artifice was therefore resorted to. By a general proclamation, on one and the same day, the scarcely conscious victims, "both old men and young men, as well as all the lads of ten years of age," were peremptorily ordered to assemble at their respective posts. On the appointed fifth of September, they obeyed. At Grand Pré, for example, four hundred and eighteen unarmed men came together. They were marched into the church and its avenues were closed, when Winslow, the American commander, placed himself in their center, and spoke:—

"You are convened together to manifest to you his Majesty's final resolution to the French inhabitants of this his province. Your lands and tenements, cattle of all kinds, and live stock of all sorts, are forfeited to the crown, and you yourselves are to be removed from this his province. I am, through his Majesty's goodness, directed to allow you liberty to carry off your money and household goods, as many as you can, without discommoding the vessels you go in." And he then declared them the king's prisoners. Their wives and families shared their lot; their sons, five hundred and twenty-seven in number; their daughters, five hundred and seventy-six; in the whole, women and babes and old men and children all included, nineteen hundred and twenty-three souls. The blow was sudden; they had left home but for the morning, and they never were to return. Their cattle were to stay unfed in the stalls, their fires to die out on their hearths. They had for that first day even no food for themselves or their children, and were compelled to beg for bread.

The tenth of September was the day for the embarkation of a part of the exiles. They were drawn up six deep, and the young men, one hundred and sixty-one in number, were ordered to march first on board the vessel. They could leave their farms and cottages, the shady rocks on which they had reclined, their herds and their garners; but nature yearned within them, and they would not be separated from their parents. Yet of what avail was the frenzied despair of the unarmed youth? They had not one weapon; the bayonet drove them to obey; and they marched slowly and heavily from the chapel to the shore, between women and children, who, kneeling, prayed for blessings on their heads, they themselves weeping, and praying, and singing hymns. The seniors went next; the wives and children must wait till other transport vessels arrive. The delay had its horrors. The wretched people left behind, were kept together near the sea, without proper food, or raiment, or shelter, till other ships came to take them away; and December with its appalling cold, had struck the shivering, half-clad, broken-hearted sufferers, before the last of them were removed. "The embarkation of the inhabitants goes on but slowly," wrote Monckton, from Fort Cumberland, near which he had burned three hamlets; "the most part of the wives of the men we have prisoners are gone off with their children, in hopes I would not send off their husbands without them." Their hope was vain. Near Annapolis, a hundred heads of families fled to the woods, and a party was detached on the hunt to bring them in. "Our soldiers hate them," wrote an officer on this occasion, "and if they can but find a pretext to kill them, they will." Did a prisoner seek to escape? He was shot down by the sentinel. Yet some fled to Quebec; more than three thousand had withdrawn to Miramichi, and the region south of the Ristigouche; some found rest on the banks of the St. John's and its branches; some found a lair in their native forests; some were charitably sheltered from the English in the wigwams of the savages. But seven thousand of these banished people were driven on board ships, and scattered among the English colonies, from New Hampshire to Georgia,—one thousand and twenty to South Carolina alone. They were cast ashore without resources; hating the poor-house as a shelter for their offspring, and abhorring the thought of selling themselves as laborers. Households, too, were separated; the colonial newspapers contained advertisements of members of families seeking their companions, of sons anxious to reach and relieve their parents, of mothers mourning for their children.

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[9] Recusants were those who refused to acknowledge the king's supremacy in matters of religion.

The wanderers sighed for their native country; but, to prevent their return, their villages, from Annapolis to the isthmus, were laid waste. Their old homes were but ruins. In the district of Minas, for instance, two hundred and fifty of their houses, and more than as many barns, were consumed. The live stock which belonged to them, consisting of great numbers of horned cattle, hogs, sheep, and horses, were seized as spoils and disposed of by the English officials. A beautiful and fertile tract of country was reduced to a solitude. There was none left round the ashes of the cottages of the Acadians but the faithful watch-dog, vainly seeking the hands that fed him. Thickets of forest-trees choked their orchards; the ocean broke over their neglected dikes, and desolated their meadows.

Relentless misfortune pursued the exiles wherever they fled. Those sent to Georgia, drawn by a love for the spot where they were born, as strong as that of the captive Jews, who wept by the side of the rivers of Babylon[10] for their own temple and land, escaped to sea in boats, and went coasting from harbor to harbor; but when they had reached New England, just as they would have set sail for their native fields, they were stopped by orders from Nova Scotia. Those who dwelt on the St. John's were torn once more from their new homes. When Canada surrendered,[11] hatred with its worst venom pursued the fifteen hundred, who remained south of the Ristigouche. Once those who dwelt in Pennsylvania presented a humble petition to the Earl of Loudoun, then the British commander-in-chief in America; and the cold-hearted peer, offended that the prayer was made in French, seized their five principal men, who in their own land had been persons of dignity and substance, and shipped them to England, with the request that they might be kept from ever again becoming troublesome by being consigned to service as common sailors on board ships of war. No doubt existed of the king's approbation. The Lords of Trade, more merciless than the savages and than the wilderness in winter, wished very much that every one of the Acadians should be driven out; and when it seemed that the work was done, congratulated the king that "the zealous endeavors of Lawrence had been crowned with an entire success." I know not if the annals of the human race keep the record of sorrows so wantonly inflicted, so bitter and so perennial, as fell upon the French inhabitants of Acadia. "We have been true," they said of themselves, "to our religion, and true to ourselves; yet nature appears to consider us only as the objects of public vengeance." The hand of the English official seemed under a spell with regard to them; and was never uplifted but to curse them.

Vol. VIII. The American Revolution

Chapter LIII

The March to Quebec[1]

September-November, 1775

The detachment which Washington, as he thoughtfully brooded over the future without hope of a speedy termination of the war, sent against Quebec, consisted of ten companies of New England infantry, one of riflemen from Virginia, and two from Pennsylvania, in all two battalions of about eleven hundred men. The command was given to Arnold, who, as a trader in years past, had visited Quebec, where he still had correspondents. In person he was short of stature and of a florid complexion; his broad, compact frame displayed a strong animal nature and power of endurance; he was complaisant and persuasive in his manners, daringly and desperately brave, avaricious and profuse, grasping but not sordid, sanguinely hopeful, of restless activity, "intelligent and enterprising."

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[10] *Psalms* cxxxvii. 1, 2.

[11] In 1763, four years after Wolfe's victory at Quebec, the Peace of Paris was signed.

[1] With the outbreak of the American Revolution in April and June, 1775, it became one aim of the colonists to close to the English an entrance from Canada via the St. Lawrence, the Richelieu River, Lake Champlain, and the Hudson River. Accordingly Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain was captured by Ethan Allen's forces in May. St. Johns, south of Montreal, after being besieged for fifty days, yielded on November 3d to Montgomery, who on November 12th took Montreal. The expedition against Quebec, without which the campaign could hardly be considered a success, is the subject of this chapter.

The next in rank as lieutenant colonels were Roger Enos, who proved to be a craven, and the brave Christopher Greene of Rhode Island. The majors were Return J. Meigs of Connecticut, and Timothy Bigelow, the early patriot[2] of Worcester, Massachusetts. Morgan, with Humphreys and Heth, led the Virginia riflemen; Hendricks, a Pennsylvania company; Thayer commanded one from Rhode Island, and like Arnold, Meigs, Dearborn, Henry, Senter, Melvin, left a journal of the expedition. Aaron Burr, then but nineteen years old, and his friend Matthias Ogden, carrying muskets and knapsacks, joined as volunteers. Samuel Spring attended as chaplain.

The humane instructions given to Arnold enjoined respect for the rights of property and the freedom of opinion, and aimed at conciliating the affectionate coöperation of the Canadians. "If Lord Chatham's son,"[3] so wrote Washington, "should be in Canada, and in any way should fall into your power, you cannot pay too much honor to the son of so illustrious a character, and so true a friend to America." Chatham, on his part, from his fixed opinion of the war, withdrew his son from the service; and Carleton, anticipating that decision, had already sent him home as bearer of despatches.

To the Canadians, Washington's words were: "The cause of America and of liberty is the cause of every virtuous American citizen, whatever may be his religion or his descent. Come then, range yourselves under the standard of general liberty."

Boats and provisions having been collected, the detachment on the evening of the thirteenth of September, marched to Medford. On the nineteenth they sailed from Newburyport, and on the morning of the twentieth were borne into the Kennebec. Passing above the bay where that river is met by the Androscoggin, they halted at Fort Western, which consisted of two block houses, and one large house, enclosed with pickets, hard by the east bank of the river, on the site of Augusta. An exploring party of seven men went in advance to discover the shortest carrying place from the Kennebec to the Dead River, one of its branches, along a path which had already been marked, but which they made more distinct by blazing the trees and snagging[4] the bushes. The detachment followed in four divisions, in as many successive days. Each division took provisions for forty-five days. On the twenty-fifth Morgan and the riflemen were sent first to clear the path; the following day Greene and Bigelow started with three companies of musketeers; Meigs with four companies was next in order; Enos with three companies closed the rear.

They ascended the river slowly to Fort Halifax, opposite Waterville; daily up to their waists in water, hauling their boats against a very rapid current. On the fourth of October they passed the vestiges of an Indian chapel, a fort, and the grave of the missionary Rasles. After they took leave of settlements and houses at Norridgewock, their fatiguing and hazardous course lay up the swift Kennebec, and they conveyed arms and stores through the thick woods of a rough, uninhabited, and almost trackless wild; now rowing, now dragging their boats, now bearing them on their backs round rapids and cataracts, across morasses, over craggy highlands. On the tenth the party reached the dividing ridge between the Kennebec and Dead River. Their road stretched through forests of pines, balsam fir, cedar, cypress, hemlock, and yellow birch, and over three ponds, that lay hid among the trees and were full of trout. After passing them, they had no choice but to bear their boats, baggage, stores, and ammunition across a swamp, which was overgrown with bushes and white moss, often sinking knee deep in the wet turf and bogs. From Dead River, Arnold on the thirteenth wrote to the commander of the northern army,[5] announcing his plan of coöperation. Of his friends in Quebec he inquired what ships were there, what numbers of troops, and what was the disposition of the Canadians and merchants; and he forwarded his letter by an Indian.

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[2] Timothy Bigelow, a blacksmith of Worcester, hearing of the battle of Lexington, marched at the head of a company of minute men to Cambridge. There he was made major.

[3] John, Lord Pitt, the older brother of William Pitt. He was serving in Canada as aide-de-camp to Sir Guy Carleton, the king's Governor in Canada.

[4] Half cutting and bending over.

[5] General Philip Schuyler, who because of illness had fallen back from St. Johns, leaving General Montgomery to besiege it alone.

On the fifteenth the main body were on the banks of the Dead River; following its direction a distance of eighty-three miles, encountering upon it seventeen falls, large enough to make portages necessary, and near its source a series of small ponds choked with fallen trees, in ten or twelve days more they arrived at the great carrying place to the Chaudière.

On the way they heard the disheartening news, that Enos, the second in command, had deserted the enterprise, leading back three companies to Cambridge. Yet the diminished party, enfeebled by sickness and desertion, with scanty food, and little ammunition, still persevered in their purpose to appear before a citadel, which was held to be the strongest in North America, and which the English officers in Canada would surely defend to the last.

The mountains had been clad in snow since September; winter was howling around them, and their course was still to the north. On the night preceding the twenty-eighth of October, some of the party encamped on the height of land that divides the waters of the Saint Lawrence and the Atlantic. As they advanced their sufferings increased. Some went barefoot for days together. Their clothes had become so torn, they were almost naked, and in their march were lacerated by thorns; at night they had no couch or covering but branches of evergreens. Often for successive days and nights they were exposed to cold, drenching storms, and had to cross streams that were swelling with the torrents of rain. Their provisions failed, so that they even eat the faithful dogs that followed them into the wilderness.

Many a man, vainly struggling to march on, sank down exhausted, stiffening with cold and death. Here and there a helpless invalid was left behind, with perhaps a soldier to hunt for a red squirrel, a jay, or a hawk, or various roots and plants for his food, and to watch his expiring breath. On Dead River, McLeland, the lieutenant of Hendrick's company, caught a cold, which inflamed his lungs; his friends tenderly carried him on a litter across the mountain, Hendrick himself in his turn putting his shoulder to the loved burden.

The men had hauled up their barges nearly all the way for one hundred and eighty miles, had carried them on their shoulders near forty miles, through hideous woods and mountains, often to their knees in mire, over swamps and bogs almost impenetrable, which they were obliged to cross three or four times to fetch their baggage; and yet starving, deserted, with an enemy's country and uncertainty ahead, officers and men, inspired with the love of liberty and their country, pushed on with invincible fortitude.

The foaming Chaudière hurries swiftly down its rocky channel. Too eager to descend it quickly, the adventurers had three of their boats overset in the whirls of the stream; losing ammunition and precious stores, which they had brought along with so much toil.

The first day of November was bright and warm, like the weather of New England. "I passed a number of soldiers who had no provisions, and some that were sick, and had no power to help them," writes one of the party. At last, on the second of that month, French Canadians came up with two horses, driving before them five oxen; at which the party fired a salute for joy, and laughed with frantic delight. On the fourth, about an hour before noon, they descried a house at Sertigan, twenty-five leagues from Quebec, near the fork of the Chaudière and the Du Loup. It was the first they had seen for thirty-one days; and never could the view of rich cultivated fields or of flourishing cities awaken such ecstasy of gladness as this rude hovel on the edge of the wilderness. They did not forget their disabled fellow soldiers: McLeland was brought down to the comfortable shelter, though he breathed his farewell to the world the day after his arrival.

The party followed the winding of the river to the parish of St. Mary, straggling through a flat and rich country, which had for its ornament many low, bright, whitewashed houses, the comfortable abodes of a cheerful, courteous, and hospitable people. Here and there along the road chapels met their eyes, and images of the Virgin Mary and rude imitations of the Savior's sorrows.

For seven weeks Cramahé, the lieutenant governor, had been repairing the breaches in the walls of Quebec, which were now put into a good posture for defense. The repeated communications, intrusted by Arnold to friendly Indians, had been, in part at least, intercepted. On the eighth of November his approach was known at Quebec, but not the amount of his force; and the British officers, in this state of uncertainty, were not without apprehensions that the affair would soon be over.

On the tenth Arnold arrived at Point Lévi, but all boats had been carefully removed from that side of the St. Lawrence. He waited until the thirteenth for the rear to come up, and employed the time in making ladders and collecting canoes, while Quebec was rapidly gaining strength for resistance. On the fifth of November a vessel from Newfoundland had brought a hundred carpenters. Colonel Allan Maclean arrived on the twelfth with a hundred and seventy men, levied chiefly among disbanded Highlanders who had settled in Canada. The *Lizard* and the *Hunter,* ships of war, were in the harbor; and the masters of merchant ships with their men were detained for the defense of the town. At nine in the evening of the thirteenth, Arnold began his embarkation in canoes, which were but thirty in number, and carried less than two hundred at a time; yet by crossing the river three several times, before daybreak on the morning of the fourteenth, all of his party, except about one hundred and fifty left at Point Lévi, were landed undiscovered, yet without their ladders, at Wolfe's Cove. The feeble band met no resistance as they climbed the oblique path to the Plains of Abraham. Wolfe had come, commanding the river with a fleet; they, in frail bark canoes, hardly capable of holding a fourth of their number at a time; Wolfe, with a well appointed army of thousands, they with less than six hundred effective men or a total of about seven hundred, and those in rags, barefooted, and worn down with fatigue; Wolfe with artillery, they with muskets only, and those muskets so damaged that one hundred were unfit for service; Wolfe with unlimited stores of ammunition, they with spoiled cartridges and a very little damaged powder.

If it had required weeks for Montgomery with an army of two thousand men to reduce St. John's,[6] how could Quebec, a large and opulent town of five thousand inhabitants, strongly fortified and carefully guarded, be taken in a moment by five hundred half armed musketeers? "The enemy being apprised of our coming," says Arnold, "we found it impracticable to attack them without too great risk." In the course of the day he led two or three hundred men within sight of the walls, where they gave three huzzas of defiance; and in the evening he sent a flag to demand the surrender of the place. The flag was not received, and the British would not come out. For two or three days Arnold encamped about a mile and a half from town, posting on all its avenues small guards, which actually prevented fuel or refreshments of any kind being brought in. Yet the invaders were not to be dreaded, except for their friends within the walls, whose rising would have offered the only chance of success; but of this there were no signs. Arnold then ordered a strict examination to be made into the state of his ammunition, and as the result showed no more than five rounds to each man, it was judged imprudent to run the risk of a battle; and on the nineteenth his party retired to Point aux Trembles, eight leagues above Quebec, where they awaited the orders of Montgomery.

CHAPTER LIV

THE SIEGE OF QUEBEC

November-December, 1775

The day before Montgomery entered Montreal,[1] Carleton, with more than a hundred regulars and Canadians, embarked on board some small vessels in the port to descend to Quebec. He was detained in the river for several days by contrary winds, and moreover he found the St. Lawrence, near the mouth of the Sorel, guarded by continental troops under Easton. On the seventeenth of November, Prescott, the brigadier who had so lately treated Allen with insolent cruelty,[2] surrendered the flotilla of eleven sail with all the soldiers, sailors, and stores on board; but in the darkest hour of the previous night, Carleton, entering a small boat in the disguise of a peasant, had been safely paddled through the islands that lie opposite the Sorel. Touching as a fugitive at Trois Rivières, he arrived on the nineteenth at Quebec, where his presence diffused joy and confidence among the loyal. Thus far he had shown great poverty of resources as a military chief; but his humane disposition, his caution, his pride, and his firmness were guarantees that Quebec would be pertinaciously defended. Besides, he had been Wolfe's[3] quartermaster general, and had himself witnessed how much of the success of his chief had been due to the rashness of Montcalm in risking a battle outside of the walls.

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[6] Captured on November 3d. (See note 1, p. 483.)

[1] November 11th. (See note 1, p. 483.)

[2] Ethan Allen, after taking Ticonderoga, had, in conjunction with Colonel Brown, made a rather foolhardy attack on Montreal. The two leaders failed to coöperate, and Allen, with thirty-one men, had been seized, insolently treated, put in heavy irons, and sent to England by Prescott, a British general. (See Bancroft, *History of the United States,* Vol. VIII, Ch. lii.)

[3] The famous English general who had died at the moment of his victory over the French at Quebec in September, 1759.

The rapid success of Montgomery had emboldened a party in Quebec to confess a willingness to receive him on terms of capitulation. But on the twenty-second, Carleton ordered all persons who would not join in the defense of the town, to leave it within four days; and after their departure he found himself supported by more than three hundred regulars, three hundred and thirty Anglo-Canadian militia, five hundred and forty-three French Canadians, four hundred and eighty-five seamen and marines, besides a hundred and twenty artificers capable of bearing arms.

Montgomery had conquered rather as the leader of a disorderly band of turbulent freemen, than as the commander of a disciplined army. Not only had the troops from the different colonies had their separate regulations and terms of enlistment, but the privates retained the inquisitiveness and self-direction of civil life, so that his authority depended chiefly on his personal influence and his powers of persuasion. Now that Montreal was taken and winter was come, homesickness so prevailed among them that he was left with no more than eight hundred men to garrison his conquests, and to go down against Quebec. He was deserted even by most of the Green Mountain Boys,[4] who at first were disposed to share his winter campaign. The Continental Congress, which was eager for the occupation of Canada, took no seasonable care to supply the places of his men as their time of enlistment expired.

On the twenty-sixth, leaving St. John's under the command of Marinus Willett of New York, and entrusting the government of Montreal to Wooster of Connecticut, and in the spirit of a lawgiver who was to regenerate the province making a declaration that on his return he would call a convention of the Canadian people, Montgomery embarked in a fleet of three armed schooners, with artillery and provisions and three hundred troops; and on the third day of December, at Point aux Trembles, made a junction with Arnold. "The famine-proof veterans," now but six hundred and seventy-five in number, were paraded in front of the Catholic chapel, to hear their praises from the lips of the modest hero, who, in animating words, did justice to the courage with which they had braved the wilderness, and to their superior style of discipline. From the public stores which he had taken, they received clothing suited to the terrible climate; and about noon on the fifth, the little army, composed of less than a thousand American troops and a volunteer regiment of about two hundred Canadians, appeared before Quebec, in midwinter, to take the strongest fortified city in America, defended by more than two hundred cannon of heavy metal, and a garrison of twice the number of the besiegers.

Quick of perception, of a hopeful temperament, and impatient of delay, Montgomery saw at a glance his difficulties, and yet "thought there was a fair prospect of success." He could not expect it from a siege, for he had no battering train; nor by investing the place, which had provisions for eight months; there could therefore be no hope of its capture but by storm, and as the engagements of the New England men ended with the thirty-first of December, the assault must be made within twenty-six days. He grieved for the loss of life that might ensue, but his decision was prompt and unchanging. The works of the lower town were the weakest; these he thought it possible to carry, and then the favor of the inhabitants in the upper town, their concern for their property, the unwarlike character of the garrison, the small military ability of Carleton, offered chances of victory.

The first act of Montgomery was a demand for the surrender of the city; but his flag of truce was not admitted. On the sixth he addressed an extravagant and menacing letter to Carleton, which was sent by a woman of the country, and of which a copy was afterwards shot into the town upon an arrow; but Carleton would hold no communication with him, and every effort at correspondence with the citizens failed.

Four or five mortars were placed in St. Roc's, but the small shells which they threw did no essential injury to the garrison. Meantime a battery was begun on the Heights of Abraham,[5] about seven hundred yards southwest of St. John's gate. The ground was frozen and covered with deep snow, so that earth was not to be had; the gabions[6] and the interstices of the fascines[7] were therefore filled with snow; and on this water was poured in large quantities, which froze instantly in the intense cold. On the fifteenth, the day after the work was finished, a flag of truce was again sent towards the wall with letters for the governor; but he refused to receive them or "hold any kind of parley with rebels." Montgomery knew that Carleton was sincere, and if necessary would sooner be buried under heaps of ruins than come to terms. The battery, consisting of but six twelve-pounders and two howitzers, had been thrown up only to lull the enemy into security at other points; it was too light to make any impression on the walls, while its embankment was pierced through and through, and its guns destroyed by the heavy artillery of the fortress. Some lives were lost, but the invaders suffered more from pleurisy and other diseases of the lungs; and the smallpox began its ravages.

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[4] Vermont partisans.

[5] The Plains or Heights of Abraham is the name given the level tableland southwest of Quebec. Here the struggle between Montcalm and Wolfe had occurred.

[6] Open basket-work cylinders, usually filled with earth.

[7] Bundles of long faggots sometimes used in fortification.

A faint glimmer of hope still lingered, that the repeated defiance would induce Carleton to come out; but he could not be provoked into making an attempt to drive off the besiegers. "To the storming we must come at last," said Montgomery. On the evening of the sixteenth, a council was held by all the commissioned officers of Arnold's detachment, and a large majority voted for making an assault as soon as the men could be provided with bayonets, hatchets, and hand grenades. "In case of success," said Montgomery, "the effects of those who have been most active against the united colonies must fall to the soldiery." Days of preparation ensued, during which he revolved his desperate situation. His rapid conquests had filled the voice of the world with his praise; the colonies held nothing impossible to his good conduct and fortune; he had received the order of Congress to hold Quebec, if it should come into his hands; should that fortress be taken the Canadians would enter heartily into the Union and send their deputies to Congress. "Fortune," said he, "favors the brave; and no fatal consequences are likely to attend a failure."

One day the general, accompanied by his aide-de-camp, Macpherson, the pure-minded, youthful enthusiast for liberty, went out to meditate on "the spot where Wolfe had fallen, fighting for England in friendship with America." He ran a parallel in his mind between the career of Wolfe and his own; he had lost the ambition which once sweetened a military life, and a sense of duty was now his only spring of action; if the Americans should continue to prosper, he wished to return to the retired life in which he alone found delight; but, said he, "should the scene change, I shall be always ready to contribute to the public safety." And his last message to his brother-in-law was: "Adieu, my dear Robert; may your happy talents ever be directed to the good of mankind."

As the time for the assault drew near, three captains in Arnold's battalion, whose term of service was soon to expire, created dissension, and showed a mutinous disaffection to the service. In the evening of the twenty-third, Montgomery repaired to their quarters, and in few words gave them leave to stand aside; "he would compel none; he wanted with him no persons who went with reluctance." His words recalled the officers to their duty, but the incident hurried him into a resolution to attempt gaining Quebec before the first of January, when his legal authority to restrain the waywardness of the discontented would cease. At sundown of Christmas he reviewed Arnold's battalion at Morgan's quarters, and addressed them with spirit; after which a council of war agreed on a night attack on the lower town. For the following days the troops kept themselves in readiness at a moment's warning. In the interval the intention was revealed by a deserter to the garrison, so that every preparation was made against a surprise; two thirds of the men lay on their arms; in the upper town, Carleton and others not on duty slept in their clothes; in the lower, volunteer pickets kept watch; and they all wished ardently that the adventurous attempt might not be delayed.

The night of the twenty-sixth was clear, and so cold that no man could handle his arms or scale a wall. The evening of the twenty-seventh was hazy, and the troops were put in motion; but as the sky soon cleared up, the general, who was tender of their lives, called them back, choosing to wait for the shelter of a favorable night, that is, for a night of clouds and darkness with a storm of wind and snow.

For the next days the air was serene, and a mild westerly wind brightened the sky. On the thirtieth a snow storm from the northeast set in. But a few hours more of the old year remained, and with it the engagement of many of his troops would expire; Montgomery must act now, or resign the hope of crowning his career by the capture of Quebec. Orders were therefore given for the troops to be ready at two o'clock of the following morning; and that they might recognize one another, each soldier wore in his cap a piece of white paper, on which some of them wrote: "LIBERTY OR DEATH."

It was Montgomery's plan to alarm the garrison at once, along the whole line of their defenses. Colonel James Livingston, with less than two hundred Canadians, was to attract attention by appearing before St. John's gate, on the southwest; while a company of Americans under Brown were to feign a movement on Cape Diamond, where the wall faces south by west, and from that high ground, at the proper time, were to fire rockets, as the signal for beginning the real attacks on the lower town, under Arnold from the west and north, under Montgomery from the south and east.

The general, who reserved for his own party less than three hundred Yorkers, led them in Indian file from headquarters at Holland House to Wolfe's Cove, and then about two miles further along the shore. The path was so rough that in several places they were obliged to scramble up slant rocks covered with two feet of snow, and then, with a precipice on their right, to descend by sliding down fifteen or twenty feet. The wind, which was at east by north, blew furiously in their faces, with cutting hail, which the eye could not endure; their constant step wore the frozen snow into little lumps of ice, so that the men were fatigued by their struggles not to fall, and they could not keep their arms dry.

The signal from Cape Diamond being given more than half an hour too soon, the general with his aide-de-camps, Macpherson and Burr, pushed on with the front, composed of Cheesman's company and Mott's; and more than half an hour before day they arrived at the first barrier, with the guides and carpenters. The rest of the party lagged behind; and the ladders were not within half a mile. Montgomery and Cheesman were the first that entered the undefended barrier, passing on between the rock and the pickets which the carpenters began to saw and wrench away. While a message was sent back to hurry up the troops, Montgomery went forward to observe the path before him. It was a very narrow defile, falling away to the river precipitously on the one side, and shut in by the scarped rock and overhanging cliff on the other, so that not more than five or six persons could walk abreast; a house built of logs and extending on the south nearly to the river, with loopholes for musketry and a battery of two three-pounders, intercepted the passage. It was held by a party consisting of thirty Canadian and eight British militiamen under John Coffin, with nine seamen under Barnsfare, the master of a transport, as cannoniers. The general listened, and heard no sound; and it was afterwards thought that the guard was not on the alert; but lights from lanterns on the plains of Abraham, as well as the signal rockets, had given the alarm; and at daybreak, through the storm, the body of troops was seen in full march from Wolfe's Cove. At their approach to the barrier, "a part of the guard was scared with a panic"; but Coffin, who during the siege "had never missed an hour's duty," restored order, and the sailors stood at their guns with lighted linstocks.[8]

Montgomery waited till about sixty men had joined him inside of the row of pickets; then exclaiming, "Men of New York, you will not fear to follow where your general leads; push on, brave boys; Quebec is ours!" he pressed forward at double quick time to carry the battery. As he appeared on a little rising in the ground, at a distance of fifty yards or less from the mouths of the cannon, which were loaded with grapeshot, Barnsfare discharged them with deadly aim. Montgomery, his aid Macpherson, the young and gallant Cheesman, and ten others, instantly fell dead; Montgomery from three wounds. With him the soul of the expedition fled. Mott was eager to go forward; but some of the men complained that their arms were wet; one or more of the officers thought nothing further could be attempted with wearied troops and no arm but the bayonet; fireballs were thrown by the enemy to light up the scene; their musketeers began to fire from the loopholes of the blockhouse; and Donald Campbell, who assumed the command of the Yorkers, encountered the reproach of ordering an immediate retreat, which was effected without further loss.

On the northwestern side of the lower town, Arnold led the forlorn hope, which consisted of more than twice as many troops as followed Montgomery. The path along the St. Charles had been narrowed by masses of ice thrown up from the river; and the battery by which it was commanded might have raked every inch of it with grape shot, while their flank was exposed to musketry from the walls. As they reached Palace Gate, the bells of the city were rung, the drums beat a general alarm, and the cannon began to play. The Americans ran along in single file, holding down their heads on account of the storm, and covering their guns with their coats. Lamb and his company of artillery followed with a fieldpiece on a sled; the fieldpiece was soon abandoned, but he and his men took part in the assault.

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[8] Sticks provided with forks for holding slow matches.—WORCESTER.

The first barricade was at the Sault au Matelot, a jutting rock which left little space between the river beach and the precipice. Near this spot Arnold was severely wounded in the leg by a musket ball, and carried off disabled; but Morgan's men, who formed the van, rushed forward to the portholes and fired into them, while others, Charles Porterfield the second, Morgan himself the first, mounted by ladders, carried the battery, and took its captain and guard prisoners. But Morgan was at first followed only by his own company and a few Pennsylvanians. It was still very dark; he had no guide; and he knew nothing of the defenses of the town. The cold was extreme; the faces of the men were hoar with icicles. Their muskets were made useless by the storm. The glow of attack began to subside, and the danger of their position to appear. They were soon joined by Greene, Bigelow, and Meigs, so that there were at least two hundred Americans in the town; and they all fearlessly pressed on in the narrow way to the second barricade, at the eastern extremity of Sault au Matelot street, where the defenses extended from the rock to the river. Under the direction of Greene, heroic efforts were made to carry them. With a voice louder than the northeast gale, Morgan cheered on his riflemen; but though Heth and Porterfield and a few others in the front files ascended the scaling ladders, it was only to see on the other side rows of troops prepared to receive them on hedges of bayonets if they had leaped down. Here was the greatest loss of life; some of the American officers fell; others received several balls in their clothes; and the assailants, of whose arms nine out of ten had been rendered useless by the storm, were exposed in the narrow street to a heavy fire from houses on both sides. A retreat was thought of; but the moment for it soon went by; though some few escaped, passing over the shoal ice on the St. Charles. Near daylight, about two hundred of the Americans withdrew from the streets, and found shelter in houses of stone, from which they could fire with better effect. It was then that Hendricks, while aiming his rifle, was shot through the heart. But the retreat of Campbell, and the certainty that the other attacks were only feints, left Carleton free to concentrate all his force against the party of Arnold. By his orders a sally was now made from Palace Gate, in the rear of the Americans, by Captain Laws, with two hundred men; they found Dearborn's company divided into two parties, each of which successively surrendered; and then the remnant of the assailants, "the flower of the rebel army," "was cooped up" within the town. Morgan proposed that they should cut their way through their enemies; but retreat had become impracticable; and after maintaining the struggle till the last hope was gone, at ten o'clock they surrendered. Thus Greene, Meigs, Morgan, Hendricks, the hardy men who had passed the wilderness with purposes of conquest, made for themselves a heroic name, but found their way only to death or a prison. To the captives Carleton proved a humane and generous enemy. The loss of the British was inconsiderable; that of the Americans, in killed or wounded, was about sixty; in prisoners, between three and four hundred.

When the battle was over, thirteen bodies were found at the place now known as Pres-de-Ville. The body of Cheesman, whose career had been a brief but gallant one, had fallen over the rocks. In the pathway lay Macpherson, a youth, as spotless as the new-fallen snow which was his winding sheet; full of genius for war, lovely in temper, honored by the affection and confidence of his chief; dear to the army, leaving not his like behind him. There, too, by his side, lay Richard Montgomery, on the spot where he fell. At his death he was in the first month of his fortieth year. He was tall and slender, well limbed, of a graceful address, and a strong and active frame. He could endure fatigue, and all changes and severities of climate. His judgment was cool, though he kindled in action, imparting confidence and sympathetic courage. Never himself negligent of duty, never avoiding danger, discriminating and energetic, he had the power of conducting freemen by their voluntary love and esteem. An experienced soldier, he was also well versed in letters, particularly in natural science. In private life he was a good husband, brother, and son, an amiable and faithful friend. The rectitude of his heart shone forth in his actions, which were habitually and unaffectedly directed by a nice moral sense. He overcame difficulties which others shunned to encounter. Foes and friends paid tribute to his worth. The governor, lieutenant governor, and council of Quebec, and all the principal officers of the garrison, buried him and his aide-de-camp, Macpherson, with the honors of war.

At the news of his death "the whole city of

Philadelphia was in tears; every person seemed to have lost his nearest relative or heart friend." Congress proclaimed for him "their grateful remembrance, profound respect, and high veneration; and desiring to transmit to future ages a truly worthy example of patriotism, conduct, boldness of enterprise, insuperable perseverance, and contempt of danger and death," they reared a marble monument "to the glory of Richard Montgomery."

In the British Parliament, the great defenders of liberty vied with each other in his praise. Barré, his veteran fellow-soldier in the late war, wept profusely as he expatiated on their fast friendship and participation of service in that season of enterprise and glory, and holding up the British commanders in review, pronounced a glowing tribute to his superior merits. Edmund Burke contrasted the condition of the eight thousand men, starved, disgraced, and shut up within the single town of Boston, with the movements of the hero who in one campaign had conquered two thirds of Canada. "I," replied North, "cannot join in lamenting the death of Montgomery as a public loss. He was brave, he was able, he was humane, he was generous; but still he was only a brave, able, humane, and generous rebel. Curse on his virtues, they've undone his country." "The term of rebel," retorted Fox, "is no certain mark of disgrace. All the great assertors of liberty, the saviors of their country, the benefactors of mankind in all ages, have been called rebels. We owe the constitution which enables us to sit in this house to a rebellion."

So passed away the spirit of Montgomery, with the love of all that knew him, the grief of the nascent republic, and the eulogies of the world.[9]

1858-1860 1860

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY

Born, Dorchester, Massachusetts, 1814, died, Dorchester, England, 1877. Motley graduated from Harvard in 1831, studied in Germany and returned home to take up law. He was secretary of the American legation at Petrograd, 1841. In 1851 he went to Holland to gather materials for the *History of the Rise of the Dutch Republic*, published in 1856. Four years later came the first part of *The History of the United Netherlands*, completed in 1868. *John van Barneveld* appeared in 1874. From 1861 to 1867 Motley was United States Minister to Austria, and in 1869-1870, Minister to England.

From THE RISE OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC[1]

PART IV. CHAPTER II.

[*The Relief of Leyden*]

The invasion of Louis of Nassau had, as already stated, effected the raising of the first siege of Leyden. That leaguer had lasted from the 31st of October 1573, to the 21st of March 1574, when the soldiers were summoned away to defend the frontier. By an extraordinary and culpable carelessness, the citizens, neglecting the advice of the Prince, had not taken advantage of the breathing time thus afforded them to victual the city and strengthen the garrison. They seemed to reckon more confidently upon the success of Count Louis than he had even done himself; for it was very probable that, in case of his defeat, the siege would be instantly resumed. This natural result was not long in following the battle of Mookerheyde.

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[9] This was in December, 1775. The story of the following six months is a melancholy tale of lack of provisions and ammunition on the part of the Americans, made worse by the ravages of an epidemic of smallpox. Although more forces were sent to Canada—even Washington being made by Congress to give up nearly half of his little army of eight thousand men—the difficulties of the journey northward, the cold, and the lack of experienced commanders, put the Americans at great disadvantage. When the forces of Burgoyne sailed up the St. Lawrence in June to relieve the English, all hope for the conquest of Canada was gone, and the remnant of the American army, including Arnold and his little garrison of three hundred men that had been stationed at Montreal, retreated. Bancroft concludes his account of the expedition with the following description of their condition on their return: "The voyage was made in leaky boats which had no awnings; so that the sick lay drenched in water and exposed to the sun. Their only food was raw pork, and hard bread or unbaked flour. A physician who was an eye-witness said: 'At the sight of so much privation and distress, I wept till I had no more power to weep.' When, early in July, all the fragments of the army of Canada had reached Crown Point, the scene of distress produced a momentary despair. Everything about them, their clothes, their blankets, the air, the very ground they trod on, was infected with the pestilence. 'I did not look into a tent or a hut,' says Trumbull, 'in which I did not find either a dead or dying man.' Of about five thousand men, housed under tents, or rudely built sheds, or huts of brush, exposed to the damp air of the night, full half were invalids; more than thirty new graves were made every day. In a little more than two months the northern army lost by desertion and death more than five thousand men." *History of the United States*, Ch. lxvii.

[1] Motley's histories are fine examples of scholarly history made fascinating. The Netherlands under Charles V. of Austria and his son Philip II. of Spain revealed the unnatural situation of a people of democratic instincts held in political servitude by a foreign power of different religious principles. They had suffered all the terrors of the Inquisition at the hands of the cruel Spanish governor-general, the Duke of Alva, until in 1570, led by William the Silent, Prince of Orange, they rose in rebellion. The heroic endurance of the city of Leyden in resisting the Spanish siege is famous in history. Count Louis, of Nassau—the reigning family in the Netherlands—a brother of the Prince of Orange, had with help from France made a successful counter attack from the French side and had thus temporarily caused the siege of Leyden to be raised. He was killed in the battle of Mookerheyde, April, 1574.

On the 26th of May, Valdez[2] reappeared before the place, at the head of eight thousand Walloons and Germans, and Leyden was now destined to pass through a fiery ordeal. This city was one of the most beautiful in the Netherlands. Placed in the midst of broad and fruitful pastures, which had been reclaimed by the hand of industry from the bottom of the sea, it was fringed with smiling villages, blooming gardens, fruitful orchards. The ancient and, at last, decrepit Rhine, flowing languidly towards its sandy death-bed, had been multiplied into innumerable artificial currents, by which the city was completely interlaced. These watery streets were shaded by lime trees, poplars, and willows, and crossed by one hundred and forty-five bridges, mostly of hammered stone. The houses were elegant, the squares and streets spacious, airy, and clean, the churches and public edifices imposing, while the whole aspect of the place suggested thrift, industry, and comfort. Upon an artificial elevation, in the center of the city, rose a ruined tower of unknown antiquity. By some it was considered to be of Roman origin, while others preferred to regard it as a work of the Anglo-Saxon Hengist, raised to commemorate his conquest of England.[3] Surrounded by fruit trees, and overgrown in the center with oaks, it afforded, from its moldering battlements, a charming prospect over a wide expanse of level country, with the spires of neighboring cities rising in every direction. It was from this commanding height, during the long and terrible summer days which were approaching, that many an eye was to be strained anxiously seaward, watching if yet the ocean had begun to roll over the land.

Valdez lost no time in securing himself in the possession of Maeslandsluis, Vlaardingen, and The Hague. Five hundred English, under command of Colonel Edward Chester, abandoned the fortress of Valkenburg, and fled towards Leyden. Refused admittance by the citizens, who now, with reason, distrusted them,[4] they surrendered to Valdez, and were afterwards sent back to England. In the course of a few days, Leyden was thoroughly invested, no less than sixty-two redoubts, some of them having remained undestroyed from the previous siege, now girdling the city, while the besiegers already numbered nearly eight thousand, a force to be daily increased. On the other hand, there were no troops in the town, save a small corps of "freebooters," and five companies of the burgher guard. John Van der Does, Seigneur[5] of Nordwyck, a gentleman of distinguished family, but still more distinguished for his learning, his poetical genius, and his valor, had accepted the office of military commandant.

The main reliance of the city, under God, was on the stout hearts of its inhabitants within the walls, and on the sleepless energy of William the Silent without. The Prince, hastening to comfort and encourage the citizens, although he had been justly irritated by their negligence in having omitted to provide more sufficiently against the emergency while there had yet been time, now reminded them that they were not about to contend for themselves alone, but that the fate of their country and of unborn generations would, in all human probability, depend on the issue about to be tried. Eternal glory would be their portion if they manifested a courage worthy of their race and of the sacred cause of religion and liberty. He implored them to hold out at least three months, assuring them that he would, within that time, devise the means of their deliverance. The citizens responded, courageously and confidently, to these missives, and assured the Prince of their firm confidence in their own fortitude and his exertions.

And truly they had a right to rely on that calm and unflinching soul, as on a rock of adamant. All alone, without a being near him to consult, his right arm struck from him by the death of Louis, with no brother left to him but the untiring and faithful John,[6] he prepared without delay for the new task imposed upon him. France, since the defeat and death of Louis, and the busy intrigues which had followed the accession of Henry III.,[7] had but small sympathy for the Netherlands. The English government, relieved from the fear of France, was more cold and haughty than ever. An Englishman, employed by Requesens[8] to assassinate the Prince of Orange, had been arrested in Zeeland, who impudently pretended that he had undertaken to perform the same office for Count John, with the full consent and privity of Queen Elizabeth. The provinces of Holland and Zeeland were stanch and true, but the inequality of the contest between a few brave men, upon that handsbreadth of territory, and the powerful Spanish Empire, seemed to render the issue hopeless.

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[2] Leader of the Spanish forces. Walloons were inhabitants of French Flanders.

[3] In the sixteenth century it was thought by some antiquarians that the Saxon conquerors of Britain came from Holland.

[4] The relations between England and Spain had been very close. Philip II. had been the husband of Queen Mary of England, and after her death had become suitor to Elizabeth. On the other hand, England depended greatly upon the Flemish trade, so that it was to her interest to remain neutral. Some of her soldiers were helping the Dutch, rather as soldiers of fortune than officially, but, as in this case, were considered untrustworthy.

[5] Lord.

[6] Count John of Nassau.

[7] King of France, 1551-1589.

Moreover, it was now thought expedient to publish the amnesty which had been so long in preparation, and this time the trap was more liberally baited. The pardon, which had passed the seals upon the 8th of March, was formally issued by the Grand Commander on the 6th of June. By the terms of this document the King[9] invited all his erring and repentant subjects to return to his arms, and to accept a full forgiveness for their past offences, upon the sole condition that they should once more throw themselves upon the bosom of the Mother Church. There were but few exceptions to the amnesty, a small number of individuals, all mentioned by name, being alone excluded; but although these terms were ample, the act was liable to a few stern objections. It was easier now for the Hollanders to go to their graves than to mass, for the contest, in its progress, had now entirely assumed the aspect of a religious war. Instead of a limited number of heretics in a state which, although constitutional, was Catholic, there was now hardly a Papist to be found among the natives. To accept the pardon then was to concede the victory, and the Hollanders had not yet discovered that they were conquered. They were resolved, too, not only to be conquered, but annihilated, before the Roman Church should be reëstablished on their soil, to the entire exclusion of the Reformed worship. They responded with steadfast enthusiasm to the sentiment expressed by the Prince of Orange, after the second siege of Leyden had been commenced: "As long as there is a living man left in the country, we will contend for our liberty and our religion." The single condition of the amnesty assumed, in a phrase, what Spain had fruitlessly striven to establish by a hundred battles, and the Hollanders had not faced their enemy on land and sea for seven years to succumb to a phrase at last.

Moreover, the pardon came from the wrong direction. The malefactor gravely extended forgiveness to his victims. Although the Hollanders had not yet disembarrassed their minds of the supernatural theory of government, and felt still the reverence of habit for regal divinity, they naturally considered themselves outraged by the trick now played before them. The man who had violated all his oaths, trampled upon all their constitutional liberties, burned and sacked their cities, confiscated their wealth, hanged, beheaded, burned, and buried alive their innocent brethren, now came forward, not to implore, but to offer forgiveness. Not in sackcloth, but in royal robes; not with ashes, but with a diadem upon his head, did the murderer present himself vicariously upon the scene of his crimes. It may be supposed that, even in the sixteenth century, there were many minds which would revolt at such blasphemy. Furthermore, even had the people of Holland been weak enough to accept the pardon, it was impossible to believe that the promise would be fulfilled. It was sufficiently known how much faith was likely to be kept with heretics, notwithstanding that the act was fortified by a papal bull, dated on the 30th of April, by which Gregory XIII. promised forgiveness to those Netherland sinners who duly repented and sought absolution for their crimes, even although they had sinned more than seven times seven.

For a moment the Prince had feared lest the pardon might produce some effect upon men wearied by interminable suffering, but the event proved him wrong. It was received with universal and absolute contempt. No man came forward to take advantage of its conditions, save one brewer in Utrecht, and the son of a refugee peddler from Leyden. With these exceptions, the only ones recorded, Holland remained deaf to the royal voice. The city of Leyden was equally cold to the messages of mercy, which were especially addressed to its population by Valdez and his agents. Certain Netherlanders, belonging to the King's party, and familiarly called "Glippers," despatched from the camp many letters to their rebellious acquaintances in the city. In these epistles the citizens of Leyden were urgently and even pathetically exhorted to submission by their loyal brethren, and were implored "to take pity upon their poor old fathers, their daughters, and their wives." But the burghers of Leyden thought that the best pity which they could show to those poor old fathers, daughters, and wives was to keep them from the clutches of the Spanish soldiery; so they made no answer to the Glippers, save by this single line, which they wrote on a sheet of paper, and forwarded, like a letter, to Valdez:—

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[8] The new Spanish governor-general of the Netherlands, successor to Alva.

[9] Philip II.

Fistula dulce canit, volucrem cum decipit auceps.[10]

According to the advice early given by the Prince of Orange, the citizens had taken an account of their provisions of all kinds, including the live stock. By the end of June, the city was placed on a strict allowance of food, all the provisions being purchased by the authorities at an equitable price. Half a pound of meat and half a pound of bread was allotted to a full grown man, and to the rest, a due proportion. The city being strictly invested, no communication, save by carrier pigeons, and by a few swift and skilful messengers, called jumpers, was possible. Sorties and fierce combats were, however, of daily occurrence, and a handsome bounty was offered to any man who brought into the city gates the head of a Spaniard. The reward was paid many times, but the population was becoming so excited and so apt, that the authorities felt it dangerous to permit the continuance of these conflicts. Lest the city, little by little, should lose its few disciplined defenders, it was now proclaimed, by sound of church bell, that in future no man should leave the gates.

The Prince had his headquarters at Delft and at Rotterdam. Between those two cities, an important fortress, called Polderwaert, secured him in the control of the alluvial quadrangle, watered on two sides by the Yssel and the Meuse. On the 29th June, the Spaniards, feeling its value, had made an unsuccessful effort to carry this fort by storm. They had been beaten off, with the loss of several hundred men, the Prince remaining in possession of the position, from which alone he could hope to relieve Leyden. He still held in his hand the keys with which he could unlock the ocean gates and let the waters in upon the land, and he had long been convinced that nothing could save the city but to break the dikes. Leyden was not upon the sea, but he could send the sea to Leyden, although an army fit to encounter the besieging force under Valdez could not be levied. The battle of Mookerheyde had, for the present, quite settled the question of land relief, but it was possible to besiege the besiegers with the waves of the ocean. The Spaniards occupied the coast from the Hague to Vlaardingen, but the dikes along the Meuse and Yssel were in possession of the Prince. He determined that these should be pierced, while, at the same time, the great sluices at Rotterdam, Schiedam, and Delftshaven should be opened. The damage to the fields, villages, and growing crops would be enormous, but he felt that no other course could rescue Leyden, and with it the whole of Holland from destruction. His clear expositions and impassioned eloquence at last overcame all resistance. By the middle of July the estates fully consented to his plan, and its execution was immediately undertaken. "Better a drowned land than a lost land," cried the patriots, with enthusiasm, as they devoted their fertile fields to desolation. The enterprise for restoring their territory, for a season, to the waves, from which it had been so patiently rescued, was conducted with as much regularity as if it had been a profitable undertaking. A capital was formally subscribed, for which a certain number of bonds were issued, payable at a long date. In addition to this preliminary fund, a monthly allowance of forty-five guldens[11] was voted by the estates, until the work should be completed, and a large sum was contributed by the ladies of the land, who freely furnished their plate, jewelry, and costly furniture to the furtherance of the scheme.

Meantime, Valdez, on the 30th July, issued most urgent and ample offers of pardon to the citizens, if they would consent to open their gates and accept the King's authority, but his overtures were received with silent contempt, notwithstanding that the population was already approaching the starvation point. Although not yet fully informed of the active measures taken by the Prince, yet they still chose to rely upon his energy and their own fortitude, rather than upon the honied words which had formerly been heard at the gates of Harlem and of Naarden.[12] On the 3rd of August, the Prince, accompanied by Paul Buys, chief of the commission appointed to execute the enterprise, went in person along the Yssel, as far as Kappelle, and superintended the rupture of the dikes in sixteen places. The gates at Schiedam and Rotterdam were opened, and the ocean began to pour over the land. While waiting for the waters to rise, provisions were rapidly collected, according to an edict of the Prince, in all the principal towns of the neighborhood, and some two hundred vessels, of various sizes, had also been got ready at Rotterdam, Delfthaven, and other ports.

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[10] "The pipe sounds sweetly while the fowler beguiles the bird." Ovid.

[11] A gulden was worth about forty cents of American money.

[12] Naarden and Haarlem, which had endured terrible sieges, finally, after receiving pledges of safety, surrendered, only to suffer worse atrocities.

The citizens of Leyden were, however, already becoming impatient, for their bread was gone, and of its substitute malt-cake, they had but slender provision. On the 12th of August they received a letter from the Prince, encouraging them to resistance, and assuring them of a speedy relief, and on the 21st they addressed a despatch to him in reply, stating that they had now fulfilled their original promise, for they had held out two months with food, and another month without food. If not soon assisted, human strength could do no more; their malt-cake would last but four days, and after that was gone, there was nothing left but starvation. Upon the same day, however, they received a letter, dictated by the Prince, who now lay in bed at Rotterdam with a violent fever, assuring them that the dikes were all pierced, and that the water was rising upon the "Land-scheiding," the great outer barrier which separated the city from the sea. He said nothing however of his own illness, which would have cast a deep shadow over the joy which now broke forth among the burghers.

The letter was read publicly in the market-place; and to increase the cheerfulness, burgomaster Van der Werf, knowing the sensibility of his countrymen to music, ordered the city musicians to perambulate the streets, playing lively melodies and martial airs. Salvos of cannon were likewise fired, and the starving city for a brief space put on the aspect of a holiday, much to the astonishment of the besieging forces, who were not yet aware of the Prince's efforts. They perceived, very soon, however, as the water everywhere about Leyden had risen to the depth of ten inches, that they stood in a perilous position. It was no trifling danger to be thus attacked by the waves of the ocean, which seemed about to obey with docility the command of William the Silent. Valdez became anxious and uncomfortable at the strange aspect of affairs; for the besieging army was now in its turn beleaguered, and by a stronger power than man's. He consulted with the most experienced of his officers, with the country people, with the most distinguished among the Glippers, and derived encouragement from their views concerning the Prince's plan. They pronounced it utterly futile and hopeless. The Glippers knew the country well, and ridiculed the desperate project in unmeasured terms.

Even in the city itself, a dull distrust had succeeded to the first vivid gleam of hope, while the few royalists among the population boldly taunted their fellow-citizens to their faces with the absurd vision of relief which they had so fondly welcomed. "Go up to the tower, ye beggars,"[13] was the frequent and taunting cry, "go up to the tower, and tell us if ye can see the ocean coming over the dry land to your relief"—and day after day they did go up to the ancient tower of Hengist, with heavy heart and anxious eye, watching, hoping, praying, fearing, and at last almost despairing of relief by God or man. On the 27th they addressed a desponding letter to the estates,[14] complaining that the city had been forgotten in its utmost need, and on the same day a prompt and warm-hearted reply was received, in which the citizens were assured that every human effort was to be made for their relief. "Rather," said the estates, "will we see our whole land and all our possessions perish in the waves, than forsake thee, Leyden. We know full well, moreover, that with Leyden, all Holland must perish also." They excused themselves for not having more frequently written, upon the ground that the whole management of the measures for their relief had been intrusted to the Prince, by whom alone all the details had been administered, and all the correspondence conducted.

The fever of the Prince had, meanwhile, reached its height. He lay at Rotterdam, utterly prostrate in body, and with mind agitated nearly to delirium, by the perpetual and almost unassisted schemes which he was constructing. Relief, not only for Leyden, but for the whole country, now apparently sinking into the abyss, was the vision which he pursued as he tossed upon his restless couch. Never was illness more unseasonable. His attendants were in despair, for it was necessary that his mind should for a time be spared the agitation of business. The physicians who attended him agreed, as to his disorder, only in this, that it was the result of mental fatigue and melancholy, and could be cured only by removing all distressing and perplexing subjects from his thoughts, but all the physicians in the world could not have succeeded in turning his attention for an instant from the great cause of his country.

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[13] The Dutch patriots had been nicknamed Sea-beggars or Water-beggars.

[14] The government, i. e., the representatives of the three estates or orders of society: the clergy, the nobility, and the common people.

Leyden lay, as it were, anxious and despairing at his feet, and it was impossible for him to close his ears to her cry. Therefore, from his sick bed he continued to dictate words of counsel and encouragement to the city; to Admiral Boisot, commanding the fleet, minute directions and precautions. Towards the end of August a vague report had found its way into his sick chamber that Leyden had fallen, and although he refused to credit the tale, yet it served to harass his mind, and to heighten fever. Cornelius Van Mierop, Receiver-General of Holland, had occasion to visit him at Rotterdam, and strange to relate, found the house almost deserted. Penetrating, unattended, to the Prince's bed-chamber, he found him lying quite alone. Inquiring what had become of all his attendants, he was answered by the Prince, in a very feeble voice, that he had sent them all away. The Receiver-General seems, from this, to have rather hastily arrived at the conclusion that the Prince's disorder was the pest, and that his servants and friends had all deserted him from cowardice. This was very far from being the case. His private secretary and his maître d'hôtel[15] watched, day and night, by his couch, and the best physicians of the city were in constant attendance. By a singular accident, all had been despatched on different errands, at the express desire of their master, but there had never been a suspicion that his disorder was the pest, or pestilential. Nerves of steel, and a frame of adamant could alone have resisted the constant anxiety and the consuming fatigue to which he had so long been exposed. His illness had been aggravated by the rumor of Leyden's fall, a fiction which Cornelius Mierop was now enabled flatly to contradict. The Prince began to mend from that hour. By the end of the first week of September, he wrote a long letter to his brother, assuring him of his convalescence, and expressing, as usual, a calm confidence in the divine decrees—"God will ordain for me," said he, "all which is necessary for my good and my salvation. He will load me with no more afflictions than the fragility of this nature can sustain."

The preparations for the relief of Leyden, which, notwithstanding his exertions, had grown slack during his sickness, were now vigorously resumed. On the 1st of September, Admiral Boisot arrived out of Zeeland with a small number of vessels, and with eight hundred veteran sailors. A wild and ferocious crew were those eight hundred Zeelanders. Scarred, hacked, and even maimed, in the unceasing conflicts in which their lives had passed; wearing crescents in their caps, with the inscription "Rather Turkish than Popish"; renowned far and wide, as much for their ferocity as for their nautical skill; the appearance of these wildest of the "Sea-beggars" was both eccentric and terrific. They were known never to give nor to take quarter, for they went to *mortal* combat only, and had sworn to spare neither noble nor simple, neither king, kaiser, nor pope, should they fall into their power.

More than two hundred vessels had been now assembled, carrying generally ten pieces of cannon, with from ten to eighteen oars, and manned with twenty-five hundred veterans, experienced both on land and water. The work was now undertaken in earnest. The distance from Leyden to the outer dike, over whose ruins the ocean had already been admitted, was nearly fifteen miles. This reclaimed territory, however, was not maintained against the sea by these external barriers alone. The flotilla made its way with ease to the Land-scheiding, a strong dike within five miles of Leyden, but here its progress was arrested. The approach to the city was surrounded by many strong ramparts, one within the other, by which it was defended against its ancient enemy, the ocean, precisely like the circumvallations by means of which it was now assailed by its more recent enemy, the Spaniard. To enable the fleet, however, to sail over the land, it was necessary to break through this twofold series of defenses. Between the Land-scheiding and Leyden were several dikes, which kept out the water; upon the level territory, thus encircled, were many villages, together with a chain of sixty-two forts which completely occupied the land. All these villages and fortresses were held by the veteran troops of the King; the besieging force being about four times as strong as that which was coming to the rescue.

The Prince had given orders that the Land-scheiding, which was still one-and-a-half foot above water, should be taken possession of at every hazard. On the night of the 10th and 11th of September this was accomplished, by surprise, and in a masterly manner. The few Spaniards who had been stationed upon the dike were all despatched or driven off, and the patriots fortified themselves upon it, without the loss of a man. As the day dawned the Spaniards saw the fatal error which they had committed in leaving this bulwark so feebly defended, and from two villages which stood close to the dike, the troops now rushed in considerable force to recover what they had lost. A hot action succeeded, but the patriots had too securely established themselves. They completely defeated the enemy, who retired, leaving hundreds of dead on the field, and the patriots in complete possession of the Land-scheiding. This first action was sanguinary and desperate. It gave an earnest of what these people, who came to relieve their brethren, by sacrificing their property and their lives, were determined to effect. It gave a revolting proof, too, of the intense hatred which nerved their arms. A Zeelander, having struck down a Spaniard on the dike, knelt on his bleeding enemy, tore his heart from his bosom, fastened his teeth in it for an instant, and then threw it to a dog, with the exclamation, "'Tis too bitter." The Spanish heart was, however, rescued, and kept for years, with the marks of the soldier's teeth upon it, a sad testimonial of the ferocity engendered by this war for national existence.

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[15] Steward or superintendent (of his household).

The great dike having been thus occupied, no time was lost in breaking it through in several places, a work which was accomplished under the very eyes of the enemy. The fleet sailed through the gaps; but, after their passage had been effected in good order, the Admiral found, to his surprise, that it was not the only rampart to be carried. The Prince had been informed, by those who claimed to know the country, that, when once the Land-scheiding had been passed, the water would flood the country as far as Leyden, but the "Green-way," another long dike, three-quarters of a mile farther inward, now rose at least a foot above the water, to oppose their further progress. Fortunately, by a second and still more culpable carelessness, this dike had been left by the Spaniards in as unprotected a state as the first had been. Promptly and audaciously Admiral Boisot took possession of this barrier also, leveled it in many places, and brought his flotilla, in triumph, over its ruins. Again, however, he was doomed to disappointment. A large mere, called the Fresh-water Lake, was known to extend itself directly in his path about midway between the Land-scheiding and the city. To this piece of water, into which he expected to have instantly floated, his only passage lay through one deep canal. The sea, which had thus far borne him on, now diffusing itself over a very wide surface, and under the influence of an adverse wind, had become too shallow for his ships. The canal alone was deep enough, but it led directly towards a bridge, strongly occupied by the enemy. Hostile troops, moreover, to the amount of three thousand, occupied both sides of the canal. The bold Boisot, nevertheless, determined to force his passage, if possible. Selecting a few of his strongest vessels, his heaviest artillery, and his bravest sailors, he led the van himself, in a desperate attempt to make his way to the mere. He opened a hot fire upon the bridge, then converted into a fortress, while his men engaged in hand-to-hand combat with a succession of skirmishers from the troops along the canal. After losing a few men, and ascertaining the impregnable position of the enemy, he was obliged to withdraw, defeated, and almost despairing.

A week had elapsed since the great dike had been pierced, and the flotilla now lay motionless in shallow water, having accomplished less than two miles. The wind, too, was easterly, causing the sea rather to sink than to rise. Everything wore a gloomy aspect, when, fortunately, on the 18th, the wind shifted to the northwest, and for three days blew a gale. The waters rose rapidly, and before the second day was closed the armada was afloat again. Some fugitives from Zoetermeer village now arrived, and informed the Admiral that, by making a detour to the right, he could completely circumvent the bridge and the mere. They guided him, accordingly, to a comparatively low dike, which led between the villages of Zoetermeer and Benthuyzen. A strong force of Spaniards was stationed in each place, but seized with a panic, instead of sallying to defend the barrier, they fled inwardly towards Leyden, and halted at the village of North Aa. It was natural that they should be amazed. Nothing is more appalling to the imagination than the rising ocean tide, when man feels himself within its power; and here were the waters, hourly deepening and closing around them, devouring the earth beneath their feet, while on the waves rode a flotilla, manned by a determined race, whose courage and ferocity were known throughout the world. The Spanish soldiers, brave as they were on land, were not sailors, and in the naval contests which had taken place between them and the Hollanders, had been almost invariably defeated. It was not surprising in these amphibious skirmishes, where discipline was of little avail, and habitual audacity faltered at the vague dangers which encompassed them, that the foreign troops should lose their presence of mind.

Three barriers, one within the other, had now been passed, and the flotilla, advancing with the advancing waves, and driving the enemy steadily before it, was drawing nearer to the beleaguered city. As one circle after another was passed, the besieging army found itself compressed within a constantly contracting field. The *Ark of Delft,* an enormous vessel, with shot-proof bulwarks, and moved by paddle-wheels turned by a crank, now arrived at Zoetermeer, and was soon followed by the whole fleet. After a brief delay, sufficient to allow the few remaining villagers to escape, both Zoetermeer and Benthuyzen, with the fortifications, were set on fire, and abandoned to their fate. The blaze lighted up the desolate and watery waste around, and was seen at Leyden, where it was hailed as the beacon of hope. Without further impediment, the armada proceeded to North Aa; the enemy retreating from this position also, and flying to Zoeterwoude, a strongly fortified village but a mile and three quarters from the city walls. It was now swarming with troops, for the bulk of the besieging army had gradually been driven into a narrow circle of forts, within the immediate neighborhood of Leyden. Besides Zoeterwoude, the two posts where they were principally established, were Lammen and Leyderdorp, each within three hundred rods of the town. At Leyderdorp, were the headquarters of Valdez; Colonel Borgia commanded in the very strong fortress of Lammen.

The fleet was, however, delayed at North Aa by another barrier, called the "Kirk-way." The waters, too, spreading once more over a wider space, and diminishing under an east wind, which had again arisen, no longer permitted their progress, so that very soon the whole armada was stranded anew. The waters fell to the depth of nine inches, while the vessels required eighteen and twenty. Day after day the fleet lay motionless upon the shallow sea. Orange, rising from his sick bed as soon as he could stand, now came on board the fleet. His presence diffused universal joy; his words inspired his desponding army with fresh hope. He rebuked the impatient spirits, who, weary of their compulsory idleness, had shown symptoms of ill-timed ferocity; and those eight hundred mad Zeelanders, so frantic in their hatred to the foreigners who had so long profaned their land, were as docile as children to the Prince. He reconnoitered the whole ground, and issued orders for the immediate destruction of the Kirk-way, the last important barrier which separated the fleet from Leyden. Then, after a long conference with Admiral Boisot, he returned to Delft.

Meantime, the besieged city was at its last gasp. The burghers had been in a state of uncertainty for many days; being aware that the fleet had set forth for their relief, but knowing full well the thousand obstacles which it had to surmount. They had guessed its progress by the illumination from the blazing villages; they had heard its salvos of artillery on its arrival at North Aa; but since then, all had been dark and mournful again, hope and fear, in sickening alternation, distracting every breast. They knew that the wind was unfavorable, and, at the dawn of each day, every eye was turned wistfully to the vanes of the steeples. So long as the easterly breeze prevailed, they felt, as they anxiously stood on towers and house-tops, that they must look in vain for the welcome ocean. Yet, while thus patiently waiting, they were literally starving; for even the misery endured at Harlem had not reached that depth and intensity of agony to which Leyden was now reduced. Bread, malt-cake, horse-flesh, had entirely disappeared; dogs, cats, rats, and other vermin, were esteemed luxuries. A small number of cows, kept as long as possible, for their milk, still remained; but a few were killed from day to day, and distributed in minute proportions, hardly sufficient to support life among the famishing population. Starving wretches swarmed daily around the shambles where these cattle were slaughtered, contending for any morsel which might fall, and lapping eagerly the blood as it ran along the pavement; while the hides, chopped and boiled, were greedily devoured. Women and children, all day long, were seen searching gutters and dunghills for morsels of food, which they disputed fiercely with the famishing dogs. The green leaves were stripped from the trees, every living herb was converted into human food, but these expedients could not avert starvation. The daily mortality was frightful—infants starved to death on the maternal breasts, which famine had parched and withered; mothers dropped dead in the streets, with their dead children in their arms. In many a house the watchmen, in their rounds, found a whole family of corpses,—father, mother, and children, side by side, for a disorder called the plague, naturally engendered of hardship and famine, now came, as if in kindness, to abridge the agony of the people. The pestilence stalked at noonday through the city, and the doomed inhabitants fell like grass beneath its scythe. From six thousand to eight thousand human beings sank before this scourge alone, yet the people resolutely held out—women and men mutually encouraging each other to resist the entrance of their foreign foe—an evil more horrible than pest or famine.

The missives from Valdez, who saw more vividly than the besieged could do, the uncertainty of his own position, now poured daily into the city, the enemy becoming more prodigal of his vows, as he felt that the ocean might yet save the victims from his grasp. The inhabitants, in their ignorance, had gradually abandoned their hopes of relief, but they spurned the summons to surrender. Leyden was sublime in its despair. A few murmurs were, however, occasionally heard at the steadfastness of the magistrates, and a dead body was placed at the door of the burgomaster, as a silent witness against his inflexibility. A party of the more faint-hearted even assailed the heroic Adrian Van der Werf[16] with threats and reproaches as he passed through the streets. A crowd had gathered around him, as he reached a triangular place in the center of the town, into which many of the principal streets emptied themselves, and upon one side of which stood the church of Saint Pancras, with its high brick tower surmounted by two pointed turrets, and with two ancient lime-trees at its entrance. There stood the burgomaster, a tall, haggard, imposing figure, with dark visage, and a tranquil but commanding eye. He waved his broad-leaved felt hat for silence, and then exclaimed, in language which has been almost literally preserved, "What would ye, my friends? Why do ye murmur that we do not break our vows and surrender the city to the Spaniards?—a fate more horrible than the agony which she now endures. I tell you I have made an oath to hold the city, and may God give me strength to keep my oath! I can die but once; whether by your hands, the enemy's, or by the hand of God. My own fate is indifferent to me, not so that of the city intrusted to my care. I know that we shall starve if not soon relieved; but starvation is preferable to the dishonored death which is the only alternative. Your menaces move me not; my life is at your disposal; here is my sword, plunge it into my breast, and divide my flesh among you. Take my body to appease your hunger, but expect no surrender so long as I remain alive."

The words of the stout burgomaster inspired a new courage in the hearts of those who heard him, and a shout of applause and defiance arose from the famishing but enthusiastic crowd. They left the place, after exchanging new vows of fidelity with their magistrate, and again ascended tower and battlement to watch for the coming fleet. From the ramparts they hurled renewed defiance at the enemy. "Ye call us rat-eaters and dog-eaters," they cried, "and it is true. So long, then, as ye hear dog bark or cat mew within the walls, ye may know that the city holds out. And when all has perished but ourselves, be sure that we will each devour our left arms, retaining our right to defend our women, our liberty, and our religion against the foreign tyrant. Should God, in his wrath, doom us to destruction, and deny us all relief, even then will we maintain ourselves for ever against your entrance. When the last hour has come, with our own hands we will set fire to the city, and perish, men, women, and children together in the flames, rather than suffer our homes to be polluted, and our liberties to be crushed." Such words of defiance, thundered daily from the battlements, sufficiently informed Valdez as to his chance of conquering the city, either by force or fraud, but at the same time he felt comparatively relieved by the inactivity of Boisot's fleet, which still lay stranded at North Aa. "As well," shouted the Spaniards, derisively, to the citizens, "as well can the Prince of Orange pluck the stars from the sky as bring the ocean to the walls of Leyden for your relief."

On the 28th of September, a dove flew into the city, bringing a letter from Admiral Boisot. In this despatch, the position of the fleet at North Aa was described in encouraging terms, and the inhabitants were assured that, in a very few days at furthest, the long-expected relief would enter their gates. The letter was read publicly upon the market-place, and the bells were rung for joy. Nevertheless, on the morrow, the vanes pointed to the east, the waters, so far from rising, continued to sink, and Admiral Boisot was almost in despair. He wrote to the Prince, that if the spring-tide, now to be expected, should not, together with a strong and favorable wind, come immediately to their relief, it would be in vain to attempt anything further, and that the expedition would of necessity be abandoned. The tempest came to their relief. A violent equinoctial gale, on the night of the 1st and 2nd of October, came storming from the northwest,

[16] The burgomaster (mayor).

shifting after a few hours full eight points and then blowing still more violently from the southwest. The waters of the North Sea were piled in vast masses upon the southern coast of Holland, and then dashed furiously landward, the ocean rising over the earth, and sweeping with unrestrained power across the ruined dikes.

In the course of twenty-four hours, the fleet at North Aa, instead of nine inches, had more than two feet of water. No time was lost. The Kirkway, which had been broken through, according to the Prince's instructions, was now completely overflowed, and the fleet sailed at midnight, in the midst of the storm and darkness. A few sentinel vessels of the enemy challenged them as they steadily rowed towards Zoeterwoude. The answer was a flash from Boisot's cannon, lighting up the black waste of waters. There was a fierce naval midnight battle; a strange spectacle among the branches of those quiet orchards, and with the chimney-stacks of half-submerged farm houses rising around the contending vessels. The neighboring village of Zoeterwoude shook with the discharges of the Zeelanders' cannon, and the Spaniards assembled in that fortress knew that the rebel Admiral was at last afloat, and on his course. The enemy's vessels were soon sunk, their crews hurled into the waves. On went the fleet, sweeping over the broad waters which lay between Zoeterwoude and Zwieten. As they approached some shallows, which led into the great mere, the Zeelanders dashed into the sea, and with sheer strength shouldered every vessel through. Two obstacles lay still in their path—the forts of Zoeterwoude and Lammen, distant from the city five hundred and two hundred and fifty yards respectively. Strong redoubts, both well supplied with troops and artillery, they were likely to give a rough reception to the light flotilla; but the panic, which had hitherto driven their foes before the advancing patriots, had reached Zoeterwoude. Hardly was the fleet in sight, when the Spaniards, in the early morning, poured out from the fortress, and fled precipitately to the left, along a road which led in a westerly direction towards The Hague. Their narrow path was rapidly vanishing in the waves, and hundreds sank beneath the constantly deepening and treacherous flood. The wild Zeelanders, too, sprang from their vessels upon the crumbling dike, and drove their retreating foes into the sea. They hurled their harpoons at them, with an accuracy acquired in many a polar chase; they plunged into the waves in the keen pursuit, attacking them with boat-hook and dagger. The numbers who thus fell beneath these corsairs, who neither gave nor took quarter, were never counted, but probably not less than a thousand perished. The rest effected their escape to The Hague.

The first fortress was thus seized, dismantled, set on fire, and passed, and a few strokes of the oars brought the whole fleet close to Lammen. This last obstacle rose formidable and frowning directly across their path. Swarming as it was with soldiers, and bristling with artillery, it seemed to defy the armada either to carry it by storm or to pass under its guns into the city. It appeared that the enterprise was, after all, to founder within sight of the long expecting and expected haven. Boisot anchored his fleet within a respectful distance, and spent what remained of the day in carefully reconnoitering the fort, which seemed only too strong. In conjunction with Leyderdorp, the headquarters of Valdez, a mile and a half distant on the right, and within a mile of the city, it seemed so insuperable an impediment that Boisot wrote in despondent tone to the Prince of Orange. He announced his intention of carrying the fort, if it were possible, on the following morning, but if obliged to retreat, he observed, with something like despair, that there would be nothing for it but to wait for another gale of wind. If the waters should rise sufficiently to enable them to make a wide detour, it might be possible—if, in the meantime, Leyden did not starve or surrender—to enter its gates from the opposite side.

Meantime, the citizens had grown wild with expectation. A dove had been despatched by Boisot, informing them of his precise position, and a number of citizens accompanied the burgomaster, at nightfall, toward the tower of Hengist—"Yonder," cried the magistrate, stretching out his hand towards Lammen, "yonder, behind that fort, are bread and meat, and brethren in thousands. Shall all this be destroyed by the Spanish guns, or shall we rush to the rescue of our friends?" "We will tear the fortress to fragments with our teeth and nails," was the reply, "before the relief, so long expected, shall be wrested from us." It was resolved that a sortie, in conjunction with the operations of Boisot, should be made against Lammen with the earliest dawn. Night descended upon the scene, a pitch-dark night, full of anxiety to the Spaniards, to the armada, to Leyden.

Strange sights and sounds occurred at different moments to bewilder the anxious sentinels. A long procession of lights issuing from the fort was seen to flit across the black face of the waters, in the dead of night, and the whole of the city wall, between the Cow-gate and the Tower of Burgundy, fell with a loud crash. The horror-struck citizens thought that the Spaniards were upon them at last; the Spaniards imagined the noise to indicate a desperate sortie of the citizens. Everything was vague and mysterious.

Day dawned at length, after the feverish night, and the Admiral prepared for the assault. Within the fortress reigned a death-like stillness, which inspired a sickening suspicion. Had the city, indeed, been carried in the night; had the massacre already commenced; had all this labor and audacity been expended in vain? Suddenly a man was descried, wading breast-high through the water from Lammen towards the fleet, while at the same time, one solitary boy was seen to wave his cap from the summit of the fort. After a moment of doubt, the happy mystery was solved. The Spaniards had fled, panic-struck, during the darkness. Their position would still have enabled them, with firmness, to frustrate the enterprise of the patriots, but the hand of God, which had sent the ocean and the tempest to the deliverance of Leyden, had struck her enemies with terror likewise. The lights which had been seen moving during the night were the lanterns of the retreating Spaniards, and the boy who was now waving his triumphant signal from the battlements had alone witnessed the spectacle. So confident was he in the conclusion to which it led him, that he had volunteered at daybreak to go thither all alone. The magistrates, fearing a trap, hesitated for a moment to believe the truth, which soon, however, became quite evident. Valdez, flying himself from Leyderdorp, had ordered Colonel Borgia to retire with all his troops from Lammen. Thus, the Spaniards had retreated at the very moment that an extraordinary accident had laid bare a whole side of the city for their entrance. The noise of the wall, as it fell, only inspired them with fresh alarm; for they believed that the citizens had sallied forth in the darkness to aid the advancing flood in the work of destruction. All obstacles being now removed, the fleet of Boisot swept by Lammen, and entered the city on the morning of the 3d of October. Leyden was relieved.

The quays were lined with the famishing population, as the fleet rowed through the canals, every human being who could stand, coming forth to greet the preservers of the city. Bread was thrown from every vessel among the crowd. The poor creatures who for two months had tasted no wholesome human food, and who had literally been living within the jaws of death, snatched eagerly the blessed gift, at last too liberally bestowed. Many choked themselves to death, in the greediness with which they devoured their bread; others became ill with the effects of plenty thus suddenly succeeding starvation;—but these were isolated cases, a repetition of which was prevented. The Admiral, stepping ashore, was welcomed by the magistracy, and a solemn procession was immediately formed. Magistrates and citizens, wild Zeelanders, emaciated burgher guards, sailors, soldiers, women, children,—nearly every living person within the walls, all repaired without delay to the great church, stout Admiral Boisot leading the way. The starving and heroic city, which had been so firm in its resistance to an earthly king, now bent itself in humble gratitude before the King of kings. After prayers, the whole vast congregation joined in the thanksgiving hymn. Thousands of voices raised the song, but few were able to carry it to its conclusion, for the universal emotion, deepened by the music, became too full for utterance. The hymn was abruptly suspended, while the multitude wept like children. This scene of honest pathos terminated, the necessary measures for distributing the food and for relieving the sick were taken by the magistracy. A note dispatched to the Prince of Orange, was received by him at two o'clock, as he sat in church at Delft. It was of a somewhat different purport from that of the letter which he had received early in the same day from Boisot—the letter in which the admiral had informed him that the success of the enterprise depended, after all, upon the desperate assault upon a nearly impregnable fort. The joy of the Prince may be easily imagined, and so soon as the sermon was concluded, he handed the letter just received to the minister, to be read to the congregation. Thus, all participated in his joy, and united with him in thanksgiving.

The next day, notwithstanding the urgent entreaties of his friends, who were anxious lest his life should be endangered by breathing, in his scarcely convalescent state, the air of the city where so many thousands had been dying of the pestilence, the Prince repaired to Leyden. He, at least, had never doubted his own or his country's fortitude. They could, therefore, most sincerely congratulate each other, now that the victory had been achieved. "If we are doomed to perish," he had said a little before the commencement of the siege, "in the name of God, be it so! At any rate, we shall have the honor to have done what no nation ever did before us, that of having defended and maintained ourselves, unaided, in so small a country, against the tremendous efforts of such powerful enemies. . . ."

1851-1855 1856

FRANCIS PARKMAN

Born, Boston, 1823, died Jamaica Plains, Massachusetts, 1893. Parkman graduated from Harvard, 1844, studied law, but inclined toward American history. Wishing to know Indians in their primitive state, he spent a summer with a Sioux tribe in the Black Hills and on the eastern Rocky Mountain slopes, impairing his health for the remainder of his life. He made many visits to Europe for documentary materials, and traveled much in America visiting the scenes of his narratives. His works deal chiefly with the relations of French, English, and Indians in the new world and include *The Conspiracy of Pontiac,* 1851; *Pioneers of France in the New World,* 1865; *The Jesuits in North America,* 1867; *La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West,* 1869; *The Old Régime in Canada,* 1874; *Count Frontenac and New France Under Louis XIV.,* 1877; *Montcalm and Wolfe,*1884; *A Half-Century of Conflict,*1892.

From THE CONSPIRACY OF PONTIAC[1]

Chapter XVI

Michillimackinac

In the spring of the year 1763, before the war broke out, several English traders went up to Michillimackinac, some adopting the old route of the Ottawa, and others that of Detroit and the lakes. We will follow one of the latter on his adventurous progress. Passing the fort and settlement of Detroit, he soon enters Lake St. Clair, which seems like a broad basin filled to overflowing, while, along its far distant verge, a faint line of forest separates the water from the sky. He crosses the lake, and his voyageurs[2] next urge his canoe against the current of the great river above. At length, Lake Huron opens before him, stretching its liquid expanse, like an ocean, to the farthest horizon. His canoe skirts the eastern shore of Michigan, where the forest rises like a wall from the water's edge; and as he advances northward, an endless line of stiff and shaggy fir trees, hung with long mosses, fringes the shore with an aspect of monotonous desolation. In the space of two or three weeks, if his Canadians labor well, and no accident occur, the trader approaches the end of his voyage. Passing on his right the extensive Island of Bois Blanc, he sees, nearly in front, the beautiful Mackinaw, rising, with its white cliffs and green foliage, from the broad breast of the waters. He does not steer towards it, for at that day the Indians were its only tenants, but keeps along the main shore to the left, while his voyageurs raise their song and chorus. Doubling a point, he sees before him the red flag of England swelling lazily in the wind, and the palisades and wooden bastions of Fort Michillimackinac standing close upon the margin of the lake. On the beach, canoes are drawn up, and Canadians and Indians are idly lounging. A little beyond the fort is a cluster of the white Canadian houses, roofed with bark, and protected by fences of strong round pickets.

The trader enters at the gate, and sees before him an extensive square area, surrounded by high palisades. Numerous houses, barracks, and other buildings form a smaller square within, and in the vacant space which they enclose, appear the red uniforms of British soldiers, the gray coats of Canadians, and the gaudy Indian blankets, mingled in picturesque confusion, while a multitude of squaws, with children of every hue, stroll restlessly about the place. Such was Fort Michillimackinac in 1763. Its name, which, in the Algonquin tongue, signifies the Great Turtle, was first, from a fancied resemblance, applied to the neighboring island, and thence to the fort.

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[1] Francis Parkman was preëminently the historian of the French in America. *The Conspiracy of Pontiac* was said by John Fiske to be "the theme of one of the most brilliant and fascinating books that have ever been written by any historian since the days of Herodotus." See the introduction to the Frontenac edition. It deals with relations between Englishmen and Indians, after France in 1760 had practically yielded Canada to England. Great dissatisfaction prevailed among the Indians: the French had tactfully been their friends; the English were haughty; it was rumored that the English would seize all the Indian land. Making use of this feeling French traders gradually aroused the Indians to opposition, and vaguely promised to help them. A prophet, too, arose among the Indians who also urged them to rise up against the whites. All these things influenced Pontiac, the chief of the Ottawas, whose home was a village near Detroit. He was a man of such unusual intellect, courage, and strength of character, that his influence was felt far and wide among the Indian tribes. He foresaw the fate of the Indians if the English were left in control, and determined to make one great effort to restore the power of his race. Accordingly a plot was formed to attack at the same time all the scattered English forts of the western frontier, the combined garrisons of which numbered not more than five or six hundred men. In the spring and summer of 1763, therefore, a force made up of Delawares, Wyandottes, Shawnees, Mingoes, Chippewas, and other tribes, besieged Detroit, and in June made the attack here described on Fort Michillimackinac (pronounced Mik'-i-li-mak'-i-nâ).

[2] Canadian river-boatmen.

Though buried in a wilderness, Michillimackinac was still of no recent origin. As early as 1671, the Jesuits had established a mission near the place, and a military force was not long in following; for, under the French dominion, the priest and the soldier went hand in hand. Neither toil, nor suffering, nor all the terrors of the wilderness, could damp the zeal of the undaunted missionary; and the restless ambition of France was always on the alert to seize every point of vantage, and avail itself of every means to gain ascendency over the forest tribes. Besides Michillimackinac, there were two other posts in this northern region, Green Bay, and the Sault Ste. Marie. Both were founded at an early period, and both presented the same characteristic features, a mission-house, a fort, and a cluster of Canadian dwellings. They had been originally garrisoned by small parties of militia, who, bringing their families with them, settled on the spot, and were founders of these little colonies. Michillimackinac, much the largest of the three, contained thirty families within the palisades of the fort, and about as many more without. Besides its military value, it was important as a center of the fur trade; for it was here that the traders engaged their men, and sent out their goods in canoes, under the charge of subordinates, to the more distant regions of the Mississippi and the northwest.

During the greater part of the year, the garrison and the settlers were completely isolated—cut off from all connection with the world; and, indeed, so great was the distance, and so serious the perils, which separated the three sister posts of the northern lakes, that often, through the whole winter all intercourse was stopped between them.

It is difficult for the imagination adequately to conceive the extent of these freshwater oceans, and vast regions of forest, which, at the date of our narrative, were the domain of nature, a mighty hunting and fishing ground, for the sustenance of a few wandering tribes. One might journey among them for days, and even weeks together, without beholding a human face. The Indians near Michillimackinac were the Ojibwas and Ottawas, the former of whom claimed the eastern section of Michigan, and the latter the western, their respective portions being separated by a line drawn southward from the fort itself. The principal village of the Ojibwas contained about a hundred warriors, and stood upon the Island of Michillimackinac, now called Mackinaw. There was another smaller village near the head of Thunder Bay. The Ottawas, to the number of two hundred and fifty warriors, lived at the settlement of L'Arbe Croche, on the shores of Lake Michigan, some distance west of the fort. This place was then the seat of the old Jesuit mission of St. Ignace, originally placed by Father Marquette[3] on the northern side of the straits. Many of the Ottawas were nominal Catholics. They were all somewhat improved from their original savage condition, living in log houses, and cultivating corn and vegetables to such an extent as to supply the fort with provision, besides satisfying their own wants. The Ojibwas, on the other hand, were not in the least degree removed from their primitive barbarism.

These two tribes, with most of the other neighboring Indians, were strongly hostile to the English. Many of their warriors had fought against them in the late war, for France had summoned allies from the farthest corners of the wilderness, to aid her in her desperate struggle. This feeling of hostility was excited to a higher pitch by the influence of the Canadians, who disliked the English, not merely as national enemies, but also as rivals in the fur trade, and were extremely jealous of their intrusion upon the lakes. The following incidents, which occurred in the autumn of the year 1761, will illustrate the state of feeling which prevailed:—

At that time, although Michillimackinac had been surrendered, and the French garrison removed, no English troops had yet arrived to supply their place, and the Canadians were the only tenants of the fort. An adventurous trader, Alexander Henry, who, with one or two others, was the pioneer of the English fur trade in this region, came to Michillimackinac by the route of the Ottawa. On the way, he was several times warned to turn back, and assured of death if he proceeded, and, at length, was compelled for safety to assume the disguise of a Canadian voyageur. When his canoes, laden with goods, reached the fort, he was very coldly received by its inhabitants, who did all in their power to alarm and discourage him. Soon after his arrival, he received the very unwelcome information that a large number of Ojibwas, from the neighboring villages, were coming, in their canoes, to call upon him. Under ordinary circumstances such a visitation, though disagreeable enough, would excite neither anxiety nor surprise; for the Indians, when in their villages, lead so monotonous an existence, that they are ready to snatch at the least occasion of excitement, and the prospect of a few trifling presents, and a few pipes of tobacco, is often a sufficient inducement for a journey of several days. But in the present instance, there was serious cause of apprehension, since Canadians and Frenchmen were alike hostile to the solitary trader. The story could not be better told than in his own graphic and truthful words.

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[3] Jacques Marquette, 1637-1675, a Jesuit missionary and explorer, established the mission at St. Ignace in about 1671.

"At two o'clock in the afternoon, the Chippewas (Ojibwas) came to the house, about sixty in number, and headed by Minavavana, their chief. They walked in single file, each with his tomahawk in one hand and scalping-knife in the other. Their bodies were naked from the waist upward, except in a few examples, where blankets were thrown loosely over the shoulders. Their faces were painted with charcoal, worked up with grease, their bodies with white clay, in patterns of various fancies. Some had feathers thrust through their noses, and their heads decorated with the same. It is unnecessary to dwell on the sensations with which I beheld the approach of this uncouth, if not frightful assemblage.

"The chief entered first, and the rest followed without noise. On receiving a sign from the former, the latter seated themselves on the floor.

"Minavavana appeared to be about fifty years of age. He was six feet in height, and had in his countenance an indescribable mixture of good and evil. Looking steadfastly at me, where I sat in ceremony, with an interpreter on either hand, and several Canadians behind me, he entered, at the same time, into conversation with Campion,[4] inquiring how long it was since I left Montreal, and observing, that the English, as it would seem, were brave men, and not afraid of death, since they dared to come, as I had done, fearlessly among their enemies.

"The Indians now gravely smoked their pipes, while I inwardly endured the tortures of suspense. At length, the pipes being finished, as well as a long pause, by which they were succeeded, Minavavana, taking a few strings of wampum in his hand, began the following speech:—

"'Englishman, it is to you that I speak, and I demand your attention.

"'Englishman, you know that the French King is our father. He promised to be such; and we, in return, promised to be his children. This promise we have kept.

"'Englishman, it is you that have made war with this our father. You are his enemy; and how, then, could you have the boldness to venture among us, his children? You know that his enemies are ours.

"'Englishman, we are informed that our father, the King of France, is old and infirm; and that, being fatigued with making war upon your nation, he is fallen asleep. During his sleep, you have taken advantage of him, and possessed yourselves of Canada. But his nap is almost at an end. I think I hear him already stirring, and inquiring for his children, the Indians; and when he does awake, what must become of you? He will destroy you utterly.

"'Englishman, although you have conquered the French, you have not yet conquered us. We are not your slaves. These lakes, these woods and mountains, were left to us by our ancestors. They are our inheritance; and we will part with them to none. Your nation supposes that we, like the white people, cannot live without bread, and pork, and beef! But you ought to know that He, the Great Spirit and Master of Life, has provided food for us in these spacious lakes, and on these woody mountains.

"'Englishman, our father, the King of France, employed our young men to make war upon your nation. In this warfare, many of them have been killed; and it is our custom to retaliate until such time as the spirits of the slain are satisfied. But the spirits of the slain are to be satisfied in either of two ways; the first is, by the spilling of the blood of the nation by which they fell; the other, by *covering the bodies of the dead,* and thus allaying the resentment of their relations. This is done by making presents.

"'Englishman, your King has never sent us any presents, nor entered into any treaty with us; wherefore he and we are still at war; and, until he does these things, we must consider that we have no other father nor friend, among the white men, than the King of France; but for you, we have taken into consideration that you have ventured your life among us, in the expectation that we should not molest you. You do not come armed, with an intention to make war; you come in peace, to trade with us, and supply us with necessaries, of which we are in much want. We shall regard you, therefore, as a brother; and you may sleep tranquilly, without fear of the Chippewas. As a token of our friendship, we present you this pipe to smoke.'

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[4] Probably an interpreter.

"As Minavavana uttered these words, an Indian presented me with a pipe, which, after I had drawn the smoke three times, was carried to the chief, and after him to every person in the room. This ceremony ended, the chief arose, and gave me his hand, in which he was followed by all the rest."

These tokens of friendship were suitably acknowledged by the trader, who made a formal reply to Minavavana's speech. To this succeeded a request for whisky on the part of the Indians, with which Henry unwillingly complied; and, having distributed several small additional presents, he beheld, with profound satisfaction, the departure of his guests. Scarcely had he ceased to congratulate himself on having thus got rid of the Ojibwas, or, as he calls them, the Chippewas, when a more formidable invasion once more menaced him with destruction. Two hundred L'Arbre Croche Ottawas came in a body to the fort, and summoned Henry, together with Goddard and Solomons, two other traders, who had just arrived, to meet them in council. Here they informed their startled auditors that they must distribute their goods among the Indians, adding a worthless promise to pay them in the spring, and threatening force in case of a refusal. Being allowed until the next morning to reflect on what they had heard, the traders resolved on resistance, and, accordingly, arming about thirty of their men, with muskets, they barricaded themselves in the house occupied by Henry, and kept strict watch all night. The Ottawas, however, did not venture an attack. On the following day, the Canadians, with pretended sympathy, strongly advised compliance with the demand; but the three traders resolutely held out, and kept possession of their stronghold till night, when, to their surprise and joy, the news arrived that the body of troops known to be on their way towards the fort were, at that moment, encamped within a few miles of it. Another night of watching and anxiety succeeded; but at sunrise, the Ottawas launched their canoes and departed, while, immediately after, the boats of the English detachment were seen to approach the landing-place. Michillimackinac received a strong garrison, and for a time, at least, the traders were safe.

Time passed on, and the hostile feelings of the Indians towards the English did not diminish. It necessarily follows, from the extremely loose character of Indian government,—if indeed the name government be applicable at all,—that the separate members of the same tribe have little political connection, and are often united merely by the social tie of totemship.[5] Thus the Ottawas at L'Arbre Croche were quite independent of those at Detroit. They had a chief of their own, who by no means acknowledged the authority of Pontiac, though the high reputation of this great warrior everywhere attached respect and influence to his name. The same relations subsisted between the Ojibwas of Michillimackinac and their more southern tribesmen; and the latter might declare war and make peace without at all involving the former.

The name of the Ottawa chief at L'Arbre Croche has not survived in history or tradition. The chief of the Ojibwas, however, is still remembered by the remnants of his people, and was the same whom Henry calls Minavavana, or, as the Canadians entitled him, by way of distinction, *Le Grand Sauteur*,[6] or the Great Ojibwa. He lived in the little village of Thunder Bay, though his power was acknowledged by the Indians of the neighboring islands. That his mind was of no common order is sufficiently evinced by his speech to Henry; but he had not the commanding spirit of Pontiac. His influence seems not to have extended beyond his own tribe. He could not, or, at least, he did not, control the erratic forces of an Indian community, and turn them into one broad current of steady and united energy. Hence, in the events about to be described, the natural instability of the Indian character was abundantly displayed.

In the spring of the year 1763, Pontiac, in compassing his grand scheme of hostility, sent, among the rest, to the Indians of Michillimackinac, inviting them to aid him in the war. His messengers, bearing in their hands the war-belt of black and purple wampum,[7] appeared before the assembled warriors, flung at their feet a hatchet painted red and delivered the speech with which they had been charged. The warlike auditory answered with deep ejaculations of applause, and, taking up the blood-red hatchet, pledged themselves to join in the contest. Before the end of May, news reached the Ojibwas that Pontiac had already struck the English at Detroit. This wrought them up to a high pitch of excitement and emulation, and they resolved that peace should last no longer. Their numbers were at this time more than doubled, by several bands of their wandering people, who had gathered at Michillimackinac, from far and near, attracted probably by rumors of impending war. Being, perhaps, jealous of the Ottawas, or willing to gain all the glory and plunder to themselves, they determined to attack the fort, without communicating the design to their neighbors of L'Arbre Croche.

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[5] Tribal or clan relationship in a common ancestry was usually signified by an animal or object, a totem, to which the tribe believed themselves to be peculiarly or even sacredly related.

[6] "The Great Leaper."

[7] Shells or strings of shells used by the Indians as money and for ceremonial purposes.

At this time there were about thirty-five men, with their officers, in garrison at Michillimackinac. Warning of the tempest that impended had been clearly given; enough, had it been heeded, to have averted the fatal disaster. Several of the Canadians least hostile to the English had thrown out hints of approaching danger, and one of them had even told Captain Etherington, the commandant, that the Indians had formed a design to destroy, not only his garrison, but all the English on the lakes. With a folly, of which, at this period, there were several parallel instances among the British officers in America, Etherington not only turned a deaf ear to what he heard, but threatened to send prisoner to Detroit the next person who should disturb the fort with such tidings. Henry, the trader, who was at this time in the place, had also seen occasion to distrust the Indians; but on communicating his suspicions to the commandant, the latter treated them with total disregard. Henry accuses himself of sharing this officer's infatuation. That his person was in danger, had been plainly intimated to him, under the following curious circumstances:—

An Ojibwa chief, named Wawatam, had conceived for him one of those strong friendly attachments which often form so pleasing a feature in the Indian character. It was about a year since Henry had first met with this man. One morning, Wawatam had entered his house, and placing before him on the ground a large present of furs and dried meat, delivered a speech to the following effect: Early in life, after the ancient usage of his people, he had withdrawn to fast and pray in solitude, that he might propitiate the Great Spirit, and learn the future career marked out for him. In the course of his dreams and visions on this occasion, it was revealed to him that, in after years, he should meet a white man, who should be to him a friend and brother. No sooner had he seen Henry, than the irrepressible conviction rose up within him, that he was the man whom the Great Spirit had indicated, and that the dream was now fulfilled. Henry replied to the speech with suitable acknowledgments of gratitude, made a present in his turn, smoked a pipe with Wawatam, and, as the latter soon after left the fort, speedily forgot his Indian friend and brother altogether. Many months had elapsed since the occurrence of this very characteristic incident when, on the second of June, Henry's door was pushed open without ceremony, and the dark figure of Wawatam glided silently in. He said that he was just returned from his wintering ground. Henry, at length recollecting him, inquired after the success of his hunt; but the Indian, without replying, sat down with a dejected air, and expressed his surprise and regret at finding his brother still in the fort. He said that he was going on the next day to the Sault Ste. Marie, and that he wished Henry to go with him. He then asked if the English had heard no bad news, and said that through the winter he himself had been much disturbed by the singing of evil birds. Seeing that Henry gave little attention to what he said, he at length went away with a sad and mournful face. On the next morning, he came again, together with his squaw, and, offering the trader a present of dried meat, again pressed him to go with him, in the afternoon, to the Sault Ste. Marie. When Henry demanded his reason for such urgency, he asked if his brother did not know that many bad Indians, who had never shown themselves at the fort, were encamped in the woods around it. Tomorrow, he said, they are coming to ask for whisky, and would all get drunk, so that it would be dangerous to remain. Wawatam let fall, in addition, various other hints, which, but for Henry's imperfect knowledge of the Algonquin language, could hardly have failed to draw his attention. As it was, however, his friend's words were spoken in vain; and at length, after long and persevering efforts, he and his squaw took their departure, but not, as Henry declares, before each had let fall some tears. Among the Indian women, the practice of weeping and wailing is universal upon all occasions of sorrowful emotion; and the kind-hearted squaw, as she took down her husband's lodge, and loaded his canoe for departure, did not cease to sob and moan aloud.

On this same afternoon, Henry remembers that the fort was full of Indians, moving about among the soldiers with a great appearance of friendship. Many of them came to his house, to purchase knives and small hatchets, often asking to see silver bracelets, and other ornaments, with the intention, as afterwards appeared, of learning their places of deposit, in order the more easily to lay hand on them at the moment of pillage. As the afternoon drew to a close, the visitors quietly went away; and many of the unhappy garrison saw for the last time the sun go down behind the waters of Lake Michigan.

CHAPTER XVII

THE MASSACRE

The following morning was warm and sultry. It was the fourth of June, the birthday of King George. The discipline of the garrison was relaxed, and some license allowed to the soldiers. Encamped in the woods, not far off, were a large number of Ojibwas, lately arrived; while several bands of the Sac Indians from the River Wisconsin had also erected their lodges in the vicinity. Early in the morning, many Ojibwas came to the fort, inviting officers and soldiers to come out and see a grand game of ball, which was to be played between their nation and the Sacs. In consequence, the place was soon deserted by half its tenants. An outline of Michillimackinac, as far as tradition has preserved its general features, has already been given; and it is easy to conceive, with sufficient accuracy, the appearance it must have presented on this eventful morning. The houses and barracks were so ranged as to form a square, enclosing an extensive area, upon which their doors all opened, while behind rose the tall palisades, forming a large external square. The picturesque Canadian houses, with their rude porticoes, and projecting roofs of bark, sufficiently indicated the occupations of their inhabitants; for birch canoes were lying near many of them, and fishing nets were stretched to dry in the sun. Women and children were moving about the doors; knots of Canadian voyageurs reclined on the ground, smoking and conversing; soldiers were lounging listlessly at the doors and windows of the barracks, or strolling in a careless undress about the area.

Without the fort, the scene was of a very different character. The gates were wide open, and the soldiers were collected in groups under the shadow of the palisades, watching the Indian ball play. Most of them were without arms, and mingled among them were a great number of Canadians, while a multitude of Indian squaws, wrapped in blankets, were conspicuous in the crowd.

Captain Etherington and Lieutenant Leslie stood near the gate, the former indulging his inveterate English propensity; for, as Henry informs us, he had promised the Ojibwas that he would bet on their side against the Sacs. Indian chiefs and warriors were also among the spectators, intent, apparently, on watching the game, but with thoughts, in fact, far otherwise employed.

The plain in front was covered by the ball players. The game in which they were engaged, called *baggattaway*[8] by the Ojibwas, is still, as it always has been, a favorite with many Indian tribes. At either extremity of the ground, a tall post was planted, marking the stations of the rival parties. The object of each was to defend its own post, and drive the ball to that of its adversary. Hundreds of lithe and agile figures were leaping and bounding upon the plain. Each was nearly naked, his loose black hair flying in the wind, and each bore in his hand a bat of a form peculiar to this game. At one moment the whole were crowded together, a dense throng of combatants, all struggling for the ball; at the next, they were scattered again, and running over the ground like hounds in full cry. Each, in his excitement, yelled and shouted at the height of his voice. Rushing and striking, tripping their adversaries, or hurling them to the ground, they pursued the animating contest amid the laughter and applause of the spectators. Suddenly, from the midst of the multitude, the ball soared into the air, and, descending in a wide curve, fell near the pickets of the fort. This was no chance stroke. It was part of a preconcerted stratagem to insure the surprise and destruction of the garrison. As if in pursuit of the ball, the players turned and came rushing, a maddened and tumultuous throng, towards the gate. In a moment they had reached it. The amazed English had no time to think or act. The shrill cries of the ball players were changed to the ferocious war-whoop. The warriors snatched from the squaws the hatchets, which the latter, with this design, had concealed beneath their blankets. Some of the Indians assailed the spectators without, while others rushed into the fort, and all was carnage and confusion. At the outset, several strong hands had fastened their gripe upon Etherington and Leslie, and led them away from the scene of massacre towards the woods. Within the area of the fort, the men were slaughtered without mercy. But here the task of description may well be resigned to the simple and manly pen of the trader Henry.

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[8] lacrosse

"I did not go myself to see the match which was now to be played without the fort, because, there being a canoe prepared to depart on the following day for Montreal, I employed myself in writing letters to my friends, and even when a fellow-trader, Mr. Tracy, happened to call upon me, saying that another canoe had just arrived from Detroit, and proposing that I should go with him to the beach, to inquire the news, it so happened that I still remained to finish my letters; promising to follow Mr. Tracy in the course of a few minutes. Mr. Tracy had not gone more than twenty paces from my door, when I heard an Indian war-cry, and a noise of general confusion.

"Going instantly to my window, I saw a crowd of Indians within the fort, furiously cutting down and scalping every Englishman they found: in particular, I witnessed the fate of Lieutenant Jamette.

"I had, in the room in which I was, a fowling-piece, loaded with swan shot. This I immediately seized, and held it for a few minutes, waiting to hear the drum beat to arms. In this dreadful interval, I saw several of my countrymen fall, and more than one struggling between the knees of an Indian, who, holding him in this manner, scalped him while yet living.

"At length, disappointed in the hope of seeing resistance made to the enemy, and sensible, of course, that no effort of my own unassisted arm could avail against four hundred Indians, I thought only of seeking shelter amid the slaughter which was raging. I observed many of the Canadian inhabitants of the fort calmly looking on, neither opposing the Indians nor suffering injury; and from this circumstance, I conceived a hope of finding security in their houses.

"Between the yard door of my own house and that of M. Langlade, my next neighbor, there was only a low fence, over which I easily climbed. At my entrance, I found the whole family at the windows, gazing at the scene of blood before them. I addressed myself immediately to M. Langlade, begging that he would put me into some place of safety, until the heat of the affair should be over; an act of charity by which he might, perhaps, preserve me from the general massacre; but while I uttered my petition, M. Langlade, who had looked for a moment at me, turned again to the window, shrugging his shoulders, and intimating that he could do nothing for me—'*Que voudriez-vous que j'en ferais?*'[9]

"This was a moment for despair; but the next a Pani[10] woman, a slave of M. Langlade's, beckoned me to follow her. She brought me to a door, which she opened, desiring me to enter, and telling me that it led to the garret, where I must go and conceal myself. I joyfully obeyed her directions; and she, having followed me up to the garret door, locked it after me, and, with great presence of mind, took away the key.

"This shelter obtained, if shelter I could hope to find it, I was naturally anxious to know what might still be passing without. Through an aperture, which afforded me a view of the area of the fort, I beheld, in shapes the foulest and most terrible, the ferocious triumphs of barbarian conquerors. The dead were scalped and mangled; the dying were writhing and shrieking under the unsatiated knife and tomahawk; and from the bodies of some, ripped open, their butchers were drinking the blood, scooped up in the hollow of joined hands, and quaffed amid shouts of rage and victory. I was shaken not only with horror, but with fear. The sufferings which I witnessed I seemed on the point of experiencing. No long time elapsed before, every one being destroyed who could be found, there was a general cry of 'All is finished.' At the same instant, I heard some of the Indians enter the house where I was.

"The garret was separated from the room below only by a layer of single boards, at once the flooring of the one and the ceiling of the other. I could, therefore, hear everything that passed; and the Indians no sooner came in than they inquired whether or not any Englishmen were in the house. M. Langlade replied that 'he could not say, he did not know of any,' answers in which he did not exceed the truth; for the Pani woman had not only hidden me by stealth, but kept my secret and her own. M. Langlade was, therefore, as I presume, as far from a wish to destroy me as he was careless about saving me, when he added to these answers, that 'they might examine for themselves, and would soon be satisfied as to the object of their question.' Saying this, he brought them to the garret door.

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[9] "What would you like to have me do about it?"

[10] Pawnee, a tribe of western Indians.

"The state of my mind will be imagined. Arrived at the door, some delay was occasioned by the absence of the key; and a few moments were thus allowed me, in which to look around for a hiding-place. In one corner of the garret was a heap of those vessels of birch bark used in maple sugar making.

"The door was unlocked and opening, and the Indians ascending the stairs, before I had completely crept into a small opening which presented itself at one end of the heap. An instant after, four Indians entered the room, all armed with tomahawks, and all besmeared with blood, upon every part of their bodies.

"The die appeared to be cast. I could scarcely breathe; but I thought the throbbing of my heart occasioned a noise loud enough to betray me. The Indians walked in every direction about the garret; and one of them approached me so closely, that, at a particular moment, had he put forth his hand, he must have touched me. Still I remained undiscovered; a circumstance to which the dark color of my clothes, and the want of light, in a room which had no window in the corner in which I was, must have contributed. In a word, after taking several turns in the room, during which they told M. Langlade how many they had killed, and how many scalps they had taken, they returned downstairs, and I, with sensations not to be expressed, heard the door, which was the barrier between me and my fate, locked for the second time.

"There was a feather bed on the floor; and on this, exhausted as I was by the agitation of my mind, I threw myself down and fell asleep. In this state I remained till the dusk of the evening, when I was awakened by a second opening of the door. The person that now entered was M. Langlade's wife, who was much surprised at finding me, but advised me not to be uneasy, observing that the Indians had killed most of the English, but that she hoped that I might myself escape. A shower of rain having begun to fall, she had come to stop a hole in the roof. On her going away, I begged her to send me a little water to drink, which she did.

"As night was now advancing, I continued to lie on the bed, ruminating on my condition, but unable to discover a resource from which I could hope for life. A flight to Detroit had no probable chance of success. The distance from Michillimackinac was four hundred miles; I was without provisions, and the whole length of the road lay through Indian countries, countries of an enemy in arms, where the first man whom I should meet would kill me. To stay where I was, threatened nearly the same issue. As before, fatigue of mind, and not tranquillity, suspended my cares, and procured me farther sleep.

"The respite which sleep afforded me during the night was put an end to by the return of morning. I was again on the rack of apprehension. At sunrise, I heard the family stirring; and, presently after, Indian voices, informing M. Langlade that they had not found my hapless self among the dead, and they supposed me to be somewhere concealed. M. Langlade appeared, from what followed, to be, by this time, acquainted with the place of my retreat; of which, no doubt, he had been informed by his wife. The poor woman, as soon as the Indians mentioned me, declared to her husband, in the French tongue, that he should no longer keep me in his house, but deliver me up to my pursuers; giving as a reason for this measure, that should the Indians discover his instrumentality in my concealment, they might revenge it on her children, and that it was better that I should die than they. M. Langlade resisted, at first, this sentence of his wife, but soon suffered her to prevail, informing the Indians that he had been told I was in his house; that I had come there without his knowledge, and that he would put me into their hands. This was no sooner expressed than he began to ascend the stairs, the Indians following upon his heels.

"I now resigned myself to the fate with which I was menaced; and regarding every effort at concealment as vain, I arose from the bed, and presented myself full in view to the Indians, who were entering the room. They were all in a state of intoxication, and entirely naked, except about the middle. One of them, named Wenniway, whom I had previously known, and who was upwards of six feet in height, had his entire face and body covered with charcoal and grease, only that a white spot, of two inches in diameter, encircled either eye. This man, walking up to me, seized me, with one hand, by the collar of the coat, while in the other he held a large carving-knife, as if to plunge it into my breast; his eyes, meanwhile, were fixed steadfastly on mine. At length, after some seconds of the most anxious suspense, he dropped his arm, saying, 'I won't kill you!' To this he added, that he had been frequently engaged in wars against the English, and had brought away many scalps; that, on a certain occasion, he had lost a brother, whose name was Musinignon, and that I should be called after him.

"A reprieve, upon any terms, placed me among the living, and gave me back the sustaining voice of hope; but Wenniway ordered me downstairs, and there informing me that I was to be taken to his cabin, where, and indeed everywhere else, the Indians were all mad with liquor, death again was threatened, and not as possible only, but as certain. I mentioned my fears on this subject to M. Langlade, begging him to represent the danger to my master. M. Langlade, in this instance, did not withhold his compassion, and Wenniway immediately consented that I should remain where I was, until he found another opportunity to take me away."

Scarcely, however, had he been gone an hour, when an Indian came to the house, and directed Henry to follow him to the Ojibwa camp. Henry knew this man, who was largely in his debt, and some time before, on the trader's asking him for payment the Indian had declared in a significant tone, that he would pay him soon. There seemed at present good ground to suspect his intention; but, having no choice, Henry was obliged to follow him. The Indian led the way out of the gate; but, instead of going towards the camp, he moved with a quick step in the direction of the bushes and sandhills behind the fort. At this, Henry's suspicions were confirmed. He refused to proceed farther, and plainly told his conductor that he believed he meant to kill him. The Indian coolly replied that he was quite right in thinking so, and at the same time, seizing the prisoner by the arm, raised his knife to strike him in the breast. Henry parried the blow, flung the Indian from him, and ran for his life. He gained the gate of the fort, his enemy close at his heels, and, seeing Wenniway standing in the center of the area, called upon him for protection. The chief ordered the Indian to desist; but the latter, who was foaming at the mouth with rage, still continued to pursue Henry, vainly striking at him with his knife. Seeing the door of Langlade's house wide open, the trader darted in, and at length found himself in safety. He retired once more to his garret, and lay down, feeling, as he declares, a sort of conviction that no Indian had power to harm him.

This confidence was somewhat shaken when, early in the night, he was startled from sleep by the opening of the door. A light gleamed in upon him, and he was summoned to descend. He did so, when, to his surprise and joy, he found, in the room below, Captain Etherington, Lieutenant Leslie, and Mr. Bostwick, a trader, together with Father Jonois, the Jesuit priest from L'Arbre Croche. The Indians were bent on enjoying that night a grand debauch upon the liquor they had seized; and the chiefs, well knowing the extreme danger to which the prisoners would be exposed during these revels, had conveyed them all into the fort, and placed them in charge of the Canadians.

Including officers, soldiers, and traders, they amounted to about twenty men, this handful being all that had escaped the massacre.

When Henry entered the room, he found his three companions in misfortune engaged in earnest debate. These men had supped full of horrors; yet they were almost on the point of risking a renewal of the bloodshed from which they had just escaped. The temptation was a strong one. The fort was this evening actually in the hands of the white men. The Indians, with their ordinary recklessness and improvidence, had neglected even to place a guard within the palisades. They were now, one and all, in their camp, mad with liquor, and the fort was occupied by twenty Englishmen, and about three hundred Canadians, principally voyageurs. To close the gates, and set the Indians at defiance, seemed no very difficult matter. It might have been attempted, but for the dissuasions of the Jesuit, who had acted throughout the part of a true friend of humanity, and who now strongly represented the probability that the Canadians would prove treacherous, and the certainty that a failure would involve destruction to every Englishman in the place. The idea was therefore abandoned, and Captain Etherington, with his companions, that night shared Henry's garret, where they passed the time in condoling with each other on their common misfortune.

A party of Indians came to the house in the morning, and ordered Henry to follow them out. The weather had changed, and a cold storm had set in. In the dreary and forlorn area of the fort were a few of the Indian conquerors, though the main body were still in their camp, not yet recovered from the effects of their last night's carouse. Henry's conductors led him to a house, where, in a room almost dark, he saw two traders and a soldier imprisoned. They were released, and directed to follow the party. The whole then proceeded together to the lake shore, where they were to embark for the Isles du Castor.[11] A chilling wind blew strongly from the northeast, and the lake was covered with mists, and tossing angrily. Henry stood shivering on the beach, with no other upper garment than a shirt, drenched with the cold rain. He asked Langlade, who was near him, for a blanket, which the latter, with cold-blooded inhumanity, refused to furnish unless security was given for payment. Another Canadian proved more merciful, and Henry received a covering from the weather. With his three companions, guarded by seven Indians, he embarked in the canoe, the soldier being tied by his neck to one of the cross-bars of the vessel. The thick mists and the tempestuous weather compelled them to keep along the shore, close beneath the wet dripping forests. In this manner they had proceeded about eighteen miles, and were approaching L'Arbre Croche, when an Ottawa Indian came out of the woods, and called to them from the beach, inquiring the news, and asking who were their prisoners. Some conversation followed, in the course of which the canoe approached the shore, where the water was quite shallow. All at once, a loud yell was heard, and a hundred Ottawas, rising from among the trees and bushes, rushed into the water, and seized upon the canoe and prisoners. The astonished Ojibwas remonstrated in vain. The four Englishmen were taken from them, and led in safety to the shore. Good will to the prisoners, however, had by no means prompted the Ottawas to this very unexpected proceeding. They were jealous and angry that the Ojibwas should have taken the fort without giving them an opportunity to share in the plunder; and they now chose this summary mode of asserting their rights.

The chiefs, however, shook Henry and his companions by the hand, professing great good will, assuring them, at the same time, that the Ojibwas were carrying them to the Isles du Castor merely to kill and eat them. The four prisoners, the sport of so many changing fortunes, soon found themselves embarked in an Ottawa canoe, and on their way back to Michillimackinac. They were not alone. A flotilla of canoes accompanied them, bearing a great number of Ottawa warriors; and before the day was over, the whole had arrived at the fort. At this time, the principal Ojibwa encampment was near the woods, in full sight of the landing-place. Its occupants, astonished at this singular movement on the part of their rivals, stood looking on in silent amazement, while the Ottawa warriors, well armed, filed into the fort, and took possession of it.

This conduct is not difficult to explain, when we take into consideration the peculiarities of the Indian character. Pride and jealousy are always strong and active elements in it. The Ottawas deemed themselves grossly insulted because the Ojibwas had undertaken an enterprise of such importance without consulting them, or asking their assistance. It may be added, that the Indians of L'Arbre Croche were somewhat less hostile to the English than the neighboring tribes; for the great influence of the priest Jonois seems always to have been exerted on the side of peace and friendship.

The English prisoners looked upon the new comers as champions and protectors, and conceived hopes from their interference not destined to be fully realized. On the morning after their arrival, the Ojibwa chiefs invited the principal men of the Ottawas to hold a council with them in a building within the fort. They placed upon the floor a valuable present of goods, which were part of the plunder they had taken; and their great war-chief, Minavavana, who had conducted the attack, rose and addressed the Ottawas.

Their conduct, he said, had greatly surprised him. They had betrayed the common cause, and opposed the will of the Great Spirit, who had decreed that every Englishman must die. Excepting them, all the Indians had raised the hatchet. Pontiac had taken Detroit, and every other fort had also been destroyed. The English were meeting with destruction throughout the whole world, and the King of France was awakened from his sleep. He exhorted them, in conclusion, no longer to espouse the cause of the English, but, like their brethren, to lift the hatchet against them.

When Minavavana had concluded his speech, the council adjourned until the next day; a custom common among Indians, in order that the auditors may have time to ponder with due deliberation upon what they have heard. At the next meeting, the Ottawas expressed a readiness to concur with the views of the Ojibwas. Thus the difference between the two tribes was at length amicably adjusted. The Ottawas returned to the Ojibwas some of the prisoners whom they had taken from them, still, however, retaining the officers and several of the soldiers. These they soon after carried to

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[11] Beaver Islands in Lake Michigan.

L'Arbre Croche, where they were treated with kindness, probably owing to the influence of Father Jonois. The priest went down to Detroit with a letter from Captain Etherington, acquainting Major Gladwyn with the loss of Michillimackinac and entreating that a force might be sent immediately to his aid.[12] The letter, as we have seen, was safely delivered; but Gladwyn was, of course, unable to render the required assistance.

Though the Ottawas and Ojibwas had come to terms, they still looked on each other with distrust, and it is said that the former never forgot the slight that had been put upon them. The Ojibwas took the prisoners who had been returned to them from the fort, and carried them to one of their small villages, which stood near the shore, at no great distance to the southeast. Among the other lodges was a large one, of the kind often seen in Indian villages, erected for use on public occasions, such as dances, feasts, or councils. It was now to serve as a prison. The soldiers were bound together, two and two, and farther secured by long ropes tied round their necks, and fastened to the pole which supported the lodge in the center. Henry and the other traders escaped this rigorous treatment. The spacious lodge was soon filled with Indians, who came to look at their captives, and gratify themselves by deriding and jeering at them. At the head of the lodge sat the great war-chief Minavavana, side by side with Henry's master, Wenniway. Things had remained for some time in this position, when Henry observed an Indian stooping to enter at the low aperture which served for a door, and, to his great joy, recognized his friend and brother, Wawatam, whom he had last seen on the day before the massacre. Wawatam said nothing; but, as he passed the trader, he shook him by the hand, in token of encouragement, and, proceeding to the head of the lodge, sat down with Wenniway and the war-chief. After he had smoked with them for a while in silence, he rose and went out again. Very soon he came back, followed by his squaw, who brought in her hands a valuable present, which she laid at the feet of the two chiefs. Wawatam then addressed them in the following speech:—

"Friends and relations, what is it that I shall say? You know what I feel. You all have friends, and brothers, and children, whom as yourselves you love; and you,—what would you experience, did you, like me, behold your dearest friend—your brother—in the condition of a slave; a slave, exposed every moment to insult, and to menaces of death? This case, as you all know, is mine. See there [pointing to Henry], my friend and brother among slaves,—himself a slave!

"You all well know that, long before the war began, I adopted him as my brother. From that moment, he became one of my family, so that no change of circumstances could break the cord which fastened us together.

"He is my brother; and because I am your relation, he is therefore your relation too; and how, being your relation, can he be your slave?

"On the day on which the war began, you were fearful lest, on this very account, I should reveal your secret. You requested, therefore, that I would leave the fort, and even cross the lake. I did so; but I did it with reluctance. I did it with reluctance, notwithstanding that you, Minavavana, who had the command in this enterprise, gave me your promise that you would protect my friend, delivering him from all danger, and giving him safely to me.

"The performance of this promise I now claim. I come not with empty hands to ask it. You, Minavavana, best know whether or not, as it respects yourself, you have kept your word; but I bring these goods to buy off every claim which any man among you all may have on my brother as his prisoner."

To this speech the war-chief returned a favorable answer. Wawatam's request was acceded to, the present was accepted, and the prisoner released. Henry soon found himself in the lodge of his friend, where furs were spread for him to lie upon, food and drink brought for his refreshment, and everything done to promote his comfort that Indian hospitality could suggest. As he lay in the lodge, on the day after his release, he heard a loud noise from within the prison-house, which stood close at hand, and, looking through a crevice in the bark, he saw the dead bodies of seven soldiers dragged out. It appeared that a noted chief had just arrived from his wintering ground. Having come too late to take part in the grand achievement of his countrymen, he was anxious to manifest to all present his entire approval of what had been done, and with this design he had entered the lodge and despatched seven of the prisoners with his knife.

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[12] Major Gladwyn in command of Fort Detroit, at this time—June, 1763—was resisting with about one hundred men, a siege by over eight hundred Indians. Detroit was the only important fort west of Niagara that had not fallen a prey to Indian massacres.

The Indians are not habitual cannibals. After a victory, however, it often happens that the bodies of their enemies are consumed at a formal war-feast—a superstitious rite, adapted, as they think, to increase their courage and hardihood. Such a feast took place on the present occasion, and most of the chiefs partook of it, though some of them, at least, did so with repugnance.

About a week had now elapsed since the massacre, and a revulsion of feeling began to take place among the Indians. Up to this time all had been triumph and exultation; but they now began to fear the consequences of their conduct. Indefinite and absurd rumors of an approaching attack from the English were afloat in the camp, and, in their growing uneasiness, they thought it expedient to shift their position to some point more capable of defense. Three hundred and fifty warriors, with their families and household effects, embarked in canoes for the Island of Michillimackinac, seven or eight miles distant. Wawatam, with his friend Henry, was of the number. Strong gusts of wind came from the north, and when the fleet of canoes were half way to the island, it blew a gale, the waves pitching and tossing with such violence, that the frail and heavy-laden vessels were much endangered. Many voices were raised in prayer to the Great Spirit, and a dog was thrown into the lake, as a sacrifice to appease the angry manitou[13] of the waters. The canoes weathered the storm, and soon drew near the island. Two squaws, in the same canoe with Henry, raised their voices in mournful wailing and lamentation. Late events had made him sensible to every impression of horror, and these dismal cries seemed ominous of some new disaster, until he learned that they were called forth by the recollection of dead relatives, whose graves were visible upon a neighboring point of the shore.

The Island of Michillimackinac or Mackinaw, owing to its situation, its beauty, and the fish which the surrounding waters supplied, had long been a favorite resort of Indians. It is about three miles wide. So clear are the waters of Lake Huron, which wash its shores, that one may count the pebbles at an incredible depth. The island is fenced round by white limestone cliffs, beautifully contrasting with the green foliage that half covers them, and in the center the land rises in woody heights. The rock which forms its foundation assumes fantastic shapes—natural bridges, caverns, or sharp pinnacles, which, at this day, are pointed out as the curiosities of the region. In many of the caves have been found quantities of human bones, as if, at some period, the island had served as a grand depository for the dead; yet of these remains the present race of Indians can give no account. Legends and superstitions attached a mysterious celebrity to the place, and here it was said the fairies of Indian tradition might often be seen dancing upon the white rocks, or basking in the moonlight.

The Indians landed at the margin of a little bay. Unlading their canoes, and lifting them high and dry upon the beach, they began to erect their lodges, and before night had completed their work. Messengers arrived on the next day from Pontiac, informing them that he was besieging Detroit, and urging them to come to his aid. But their warlike ardor had well-nigh died out. A senseless alarm prevailed among them, and they now thought more of securing their own safety than of injuring the enemy. A vigilant watch was kept up all day, and the unusual precaution taken of placing guards at night. Their fears, however, did not prevent them from seizing two English trading canoes, which had come from Montreal by way of the Ottawa. Among the booty found in them was a quantity of whisky, and a general debauch was the immediate result. As night closed in, the dolorous chanting of drunken songs was heard from within the lodges, the prelude of a scene of riot; and Wawatam, knowing that his friend Henry's life would be in danger, privately led him out of the camp to a cavern in the hills, towards the interior of the island. Here the trader spent the night, in a solitude made doubly dreary by a sense of his forlorn and perilous situation. On waking in the morning, he found that he had been lying on human bones, which covered the floor of the cave. The place had anciently served as a charnel-house. Here he spent another solitary night, before his friend came to apprise him that he might return with safety to the camp.

Famine soon began to be felt among the Indians, who were sometimes without food for days together. No complaints were heard; but with faces blackened, in sign of sorrow, they patiently endured the privation with that resignation, under inevitable suffering, which distinguishes the whole Indian race.

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[13] spirit (Indian)

They were at length compelled to cross over to the north shore of Lake Huron, where fish were more abundant, and here they remained until the end of summer, when they gradually dispersed, each family repairing to its winter hunting-grounds. Henry, painted and attired like an Indian, followed his friend Wawatam, and spent a lonely winter among the frozen forests, hunting the bear and moose for subsistence.

The posts of Green Bay and the Sault Ste. Marie did not share the fate of Michillimackinac. During the preceding winter, Ste. Marie had been partially destroyed by an accidental fire, and was therefore abandoned, the garrison withdrawing to Michillimackinac, where many of them perished in the massacre. The fort at Green Bay first received an English garrison in the year 1761, at the same time with the other posts of this region. The force consisted of seventeen men, commanded by Lieutenant Gorell. Though so few in number, their duties were of a very important character. In the neighborhood of Green Bay were numerous and powerful Indian tribes. The Menomonies lived at the mouth of Fox River, close to the fort. The Winnebagoes had several villages on the lake which bears their name, and the Sacs and Foxes were established on the River Wisconsin, in a large village composed of houses neatly built of logs and bark, and surrounded by fields of corn and vegetables. West of the Mississippi was the powerful nation of the Dahcotah, whose strength was loosely estimated at thirty thousand fighting men, and who, in the excess of their haughtiness, styled the surrounding tribes their dogs and slaves. The commandant of Green Bay was the representative of the British government, in communication with all these tribes. It devolved upon him to secure their friendship, and keep them at peace; and he was also intrusted, in a great measure, with the power of regulating the fur trade among them. In the course of each season, parties of Indians, from every quarter, would come to the fort, each expecting to be received with speeches and presents.

Gorell seems to have acquitted himself with great judgment and prudence. On first arriving at the fort, he had found its defenses decayed and ruinous, the Canadian inhabitants unfriendly, and many of the Indians disposed to hostility. His good conduct contributed to allay their irritation, and he was particularly successful in conciliating his immediate neighbors, the Menomonies. They had taken an active part in the late war between France and England, and their spirits were humbled by the losses they had sustained, as well as by recent ravages of the smallpox. Gorell summoned them to a council, and delivered a speech, in which he avoided wounding their pride, but at the same time assumed a tone of firmness and decision, such as can alone command an Indian's respect. He told them that the King of England had heard of their ill conduct, but that he was ready to forget all that had passed. If, however, they should again give him cause of complaint, he would send an army, numerous as the trees of the forest, and utterly destroy them. Flattering expressions of confidence and esteem succeeded, and the whole was enforced by the distribution of a few presents. The Menomonies replied by assurances of friendship, more sincerely made and faithfully kept than could have been expected. As Indians of the other tribes came from time to time to the fort, they met with a similar reception, and, in his whole intercourse with them, the constant aim of the commandant was to gain their good will. The result was most happy for himself and his garrison.

On the fifteenth of June, 1763, an Ottawa Indian brought to Gorell the following letter from Captain Etherington:—

"Michillimackinac, June 11, 1763.

"Dear Sir:

"This place was taken by surprise, on the fourth instant, by the Chippeways, [Ojibwas,] at which time Lieutenant Jamet and twenty [fifteen] more were killed, and all the rest taken prisoners; but our good friends, the Ottawas, have taken Lieutenant Lesley, me, and eleven men, out of their hands, and have promised to reinstate us again. You'll therefore, on the receipt of this, which I send by a canoe of Ottawas, set out with all your garrison, and what English traders you have with you, and come with the Indian who gives you this, who will conduct you safe to me. You must be sure to follow the instruction you receive from the bearer of this, as you are by no means to come to this post before you see me at the village, twenty miles from this. . . . I must once more beg you'll lose no time in coming to join me; at the same time, be very careful, and always be on your guard. I long much to see you, and am, dear sir,

"Your most humble serv't.

"Geo. Etherington.

"J. Gorell,
"Royal Americans."

On receiving this letter, Gorell summoned the Menomonies to a council, told them what the Ojibwas had done, and said that he and his soldiers were going to Michillimackinac to restore order, adding, that during his absence he commended the fort to their care. Great numbers of the Winnebagoes and of the Sacs and Foxes afterwards arrived, and Gorell addressed them in nearly the same words. Presents were given them, and it soon appeared that the greater part were well disposed towards the English, though a few were inclined to prevent their departure, and even to threaten hostility. At this juncture, a fortunate incident occurred. A Dahcotah chief arrived with a message from his people to the following import: They had heard, he said, of the bad conduct of the Ojibwas. They hoped that the tribes of Green Bay would not follow their example, but, on the contrary, would protect the English garrison. Unless they did so, the Dahcotah would fall upon them, and take ample revenge. This auspicious interference must, no doubt, be ascribed to the hatred with which the Dahcotah had long regarded the Ojibwas. That the latter should espouse one side of the quarrel, was abundant reason to the Dahcotah for adopting the other.

Some of the Green Bay Indians were also at enmity with the Ojibwas, and all opposition to the departure of the English was now at an end. Indeed, some of the more friendly offered to escort the garrison on its way; and on the twenty-first of June, Gorell's party embarked in several bateaux,[14] accompanied by ninety warriors in canoes. Approaching Isle du Castor, near the mouth of Green Bay, an alarm was given that the Ojibwas were lying there in ambush; on which the Menomonies raised the war-song, stripped themselves, and prepared to do battle in behalf of the English. The alarm, however, proved false; and, having crossed Lake Michigan in safety, the party arrived at the village of L'Arbre Croche on the thirtieth. The Ottawas came down to the beach to salute them with a discharge of guns, and, on landing, they were presented with the pipe of peace. Captain Etherington and Lieutenant Leslie, with eleven men, were in the village, detained as prisoners, though treated with kindness. It was thought that the Ottawas intended to disarm the party of Gorell also; but the latter gave out that he would resist such an attempt, and his soldiers were permitted to retain their weapons.

Several succeeding days were occupied by the Indians in holding councils. Those from Green Bay requested the Ottawas to set their prisoners at liberty, and the latter, at length, assented. A difficulty still remained, as the Ojibwas had declared that they would prevent the English from passing down to Montreal. Their chiefs were therefore summoned; and being at this time, as we have seen, in a state of much alarm, they at length reluctantly yielded the point. On the eighteenth of July, the English, escorted by a fleet of Indian canoes, left L'Arbre Croche, and reaching, without interruption, the portage of the River Ottawa, descended to Montreal, where they all arrived in safety, on the thirteenth day of August. Except the garrison of Detroit, not a British soldier now remained in the region of the lakes.

1848-1850 **1851**

HENRY CLAY

Born, Hanover County, Virginia, 1777, died, Washington, D. C., 1852. Clay was the son of a Baptist minister; he was self-supporting and self-educated, was admitted to the bar at Richmond, 1797, entered politics, removed to Kentucky, and rose quickly in office. In 1806-1807, and again, 1809-1811, he filled vacant seats in the United States Senate. He was in Congress most of the time from 1811 to 1825, often as speaker of the House of Representatives. As a peace commissioner he signed the Treaty of Ghent, 1814. In 1824, 1832, and 1844 he was a candidate for the presidency. From 1825 to 1839 he was secretary of state, and in 1831 and 1848 he was elected to the United States Senate.

ON THE GREEK REVOLUTION[1]

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JANUARY 20, 1824

In rising, let me state distinctly the substance of the original proposition of the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. Webster], with that of the amendment of the gentleman from South Carolina [Mr. Poinsett]. The resolution proposes a provision of the means to defray the expense of deputing a commissioner or agent to Greece, whenever the President, who knows, or ought to know, the disposition of all the European powers, Turkish or Christian, shall deem it proper. The amendment goes to withhold any appropriation to that object, but to make a public declaration of our sympathy with the Greeks, and of our good wishes for the success of their cause. And how has this simple, unpretending, unambitious, this harmless proposition, been treated in debate? It has been argued as if it offered aid to the Greeks; as if it proposed the recognition of the independence of their government; as a measure of unjustifiable interference in the internal affairs of a foreign state, and, finally, as war. And they who thus argue the question, while they absolutely surrender themselves to the illusions of their own fervid imaginations, and depict, in glowing terms, the monstrous and alarming consequences which are to spring out of a proposition so simple, impute to us, who are its humble advocates, quixotism, quixotism! Whilst they are taking the most extravagant and boundless range, and arguing anything and everything but the question before the committee, they accuse us of enthusiasm, of giving the reins to excited feeling, of being transported by our imaginations. No, sir, the resolution is no proposition for aid, nor for recognition, nor for interference, nor for war.

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[14] boats (Fr.)

[1] The Greek revolution against the Turks, who had ruled Greece since 1453, broke out in 1821; in 1822 independence was proclaimed, but the war went on until 1827, and matters were not fully settled until 1832. Since then Greece has been fully recognized as an independent nation.

I know that there are some who object to the resolution on account of the source from which it has sprung—who except[2] to its mover, as if its value or importance were to be estimated by personal considerations. I have long had the pleasure of knowing the honorable gentleman from Massachusetts, and sometimes that of acting with him; and I have much satisfaction in expressing my high admiration of his great talents. But I would appeal to my Republican friends, those faithful sentinels of civil liberty with whom I have ever acted, shall we reject a proposition, consonant to our principles, favoring the good and great cause, on account of the political character of its mover? Shall we not rather look to the intrinsic merits of the measure, and seek every fit occasion to strengthen and perpetuate liberal principles and noble sentiments? If it were possible for Republicans to cease to be the champions of human freedom, and if Federalists become its only supporters, I would cease to be a Republican; I would become a Federalist. The preservation of the public confidence can only be secured, or merited, by a faithful adherence to the principles by which it has been acquired.

Mr. Chairman, is it not extraordinary that for these two successive years the President of the United States should have been freely indulged, not only without censure, but with universal applause, to express the feelings which both the resolution and the amendment proclaim, and yet, if this House venture to unite with him, the most awful consequences are to ensue? From Maine to Georgia, from the Atlantic ocean to the Gulf of Mexico, the sentiment of approbation has blazed with the rapidity of electricity. Everywhere the interest in the Grecian cause is felt with the deepest intensity, expressed in every form, and increases with every new day and passing hour. And are the representatives of the people alone to be insulated from the common moral atmosphere of the whole land? Shall we shut ourselves up in apathy, and separate ourselves from our country, from our constituents, from our chief magistrate, from our principles?

The measure has been most unreasonably magnified. Gentlemen speak of the watchful jealousy of the Turk, and seem to think the slightest movement of this body will be matter of serious speculation at Constantinople. I believe that neither the Sublime Porte,[3] nor the European allies,[4] attach any such exaggerated importance to the acts and deliberations of this body. The Turk will, in all probability, never hear of the names of the gentlemen who either espouse or oppose the resolution. It certainly is not without a value; but that value is altogether moral; it throws our little tribute into the vast stream of public opinion, which sooner or later must regulate the physical action upon the great interests of the civilized world. But, rely upon it, the Ottoman is not about to declare war against us because this unoffending proposition has been offered by my honorable friend from Massachusetts, whose name, however distinguished, and eminent he may be in our own country, has probably never reached the ears of the Sublime Porte. The allied powers are not going to be thrown into a state of consternation, because we appropriate some two or three thousand dollars to send an agent to Greece.

The question has been argued as if the Greeks would be exposed to still more shocking enormities by its passage; as if the Turkish scimitar would be rendered still keener, and dyed deeper and yet deeper in Christian blood. Sir, if such is to be the effect of the declaration of our sympathy, the evil has been already produced. That declaration has been already publicly and solemnly made by the chief magistrate of the United States, in two distinct messages. It is this document which commands, at home and abroad, the most fixed and universal attention; which is translated into all the foreign journals; read by sovereigns and their ministers; and, possibly, in the Divan[5] itself. But our resolutions are domestic, for home consumption, and rarely, if ever, meet imperial or royal eyes. The President, in his messages, after a most touching representation of the feelings excited by the Greek insurrection, tells you that the dominion of the Turk is gone forever; and that the most sanguine hope is entertained that Greece will achieve her independence. Well, sir, if this be the fact, if the allied powers themselves may, possibly, before we again assemble in this hall, acknowledge that independence, is it not fit and becoming in this House to make provision that our President shall be among the foremost, or at least not among the last, in that acknowledgment? So far from this resolution being likely to whet the vengeance of the Turk against his Grecian victims, I believe its tendency will be directly the reverse. Sir, with all his unlimited power, and in all the elevation of his despotic throne, he is at last but man, made as we are, of flesh, of muscle, of bone and sinew. He is susceptible of pain, and can feel, and has felt the uncalculating valor of American freemen in some of his dominions. And when he is made to understand that the executive of this government is sustained by the representatives of the people; that our entire political fabric, base, column, and entablature, rulers and people, with heart, soul, mind, and strength, are all on the side of the gallant people whom he would crush, he will be more likely to restrain than to increase his atrocities upon suffering and bleeding Greece.

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[2] take exception, object.

[3] The Turkish government.

[4] England, France, and Russia aided Greece in her struggle for independence by sending their fleets to the Ægean Sea.

The gentleman from New Hampshire [Mr. Bartlett] has made, on this occasion, a very ingenious, sensible, and ironical speech—an admirable *début* for a new member, and such as I hope we shall often have repeated on this floor. But permit me to advise my young friend to remember the maxim that "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof"; and when the resolution, on another subject, which I had the honor to submit, shall come up to be discussed, I hope he will not content himself with saying, as he has now done, that it is a very extraordinary one; but that he will then favor the House with an argumentative speech, proving that it is our duty quietly to see laid prostrate every fortress of human hope, and to behold, with indifference, the last outwork of liberty taken and destroyed.

It has been said that the proposed measure will be a departure from our uniform policy with respect to foreign nations; that it will provoke the wrath of the Holy Alliance;[6] and that it will, in effect, be a repetition of their own offense, by an unjustifiable interposition in the domestic concerns of other powers. No, sir, not even if it authorized, which it does not, an immediate recognition of Grecian independence. What has been the settled and steady policy and practice of this government, from the days of Washington to the present moment? In the case of France,[7] the father of his country and his successors received Genêt, Fouchet, and all the French ministers who followed them, whether sent from king, convention, anarchy, emperor, or king again. The rule we have ever followed has been this: to look at the state of the fact, and to recognize that government, be it what it might, which was in actual possession of sovereign power. When one government is overthrown, and another is established on its ruins, without embarrassing ourselves with any of the principles involved in the contest, we have ever acknowledged the new and actual government as soon as it had undisputed existence. Our simple inquiry has been, is there a government *de facto?* We have had a recent and memorable example. When the allied ministers retired from Madrid, and refused to accompany Ferdinand to Cadiz,[8] ours remained, and we sent out a new minister, who sought at that port, to present himself to the constitutional king. Why? Because it was the government of Spain, in fact. Did the allies declare war against us for the exercise of this incontestable attribute of sovereignty?

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[5] The Turkish council of state.

[6] The Holy Alliance, formed in 1815 by the chief European powers, except England, was ostensibly intended as a league for promoting the principles of Christianity. In reality, however, it became an instrument for the suppression of political liberty in Europe and the Spanish colonies of South America. When these revolted, the United States continued to trade and to sympathize with them, and there seems to have been a fear that European armies might invade our country.

[7] During the frequent changes in the form of the French Government following 1792, the diplomatic relations between France and the United States continued practically uninterrupted.

[8] Ferdinand VII. of Spain was so unjust and obnoxious that revolutionists, or constitutionalists as they called themselves, whose headquarters were at Cadiz, forced him to reëstablish the constitution of 1812, which he had abrogated. He therefore left Madrid and went to Cadiz. France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, temporarily defeated in their plan to strengthen the monarchy, withdrew, but later, however, in 1823, forced the constitutionalists to give way.

Did they even transmit any diplomatic note complaining of our conduct? The line of our European policy has been so plainly described that it is impossible to mistake it. We are to abstain from all interference in their disputes, to take no part in their contests, to make no entangling alliances with any of them; but to assert and exercise our indisputable right of opening and maintaining diplomatic intercourse with any actual sovereignty.

There is reason to apprehend that a tremendous storm is ready to burst upon our happy country—one which may call into action all our vigor, courage, and resources. Is it wise or prudent, in preparing to breast the storm, if it must come, to talk to this nation of its incompetency to repel European aggression—to lower its spirit, to weaken its moral energy, and to qualify it for easy conquest and base submission? If there be any reality in the dangers which are supposed to encompass us, should we not animate the people, and adjure them to believe, as I do, that our resources are ample; and that we can bring into the field a million of freemen, ready to exhaust their last drop of blood, and to spend the last cent in the defense of the country, its liberty, and its institutions? Sir, are these, if united, to be conquered by all Europe combined? All the perils to which we can possibly be exposed are much less in reality than the imagination is disposed to paint them. And they are best averted by an habitual contemplation of them, by reducing them to their true dimensions. If combined Europe is to precipitate itself upon us, we cannot too soon begin to invigorate our strength, to teach our heads to think, our hearts to conceive, and our arms to execute the high and noble deeds which belong to the character and glory of our country. The experience of the world instructs us, that conquests are already achieved which are boldly and firmly resolved on; and that men only become slaves who have ceased to resolve to be free. If we wish to cover ourselves with the best of all armor, let us not discourage our people, let us stimulate their ardor, let us sustain their resolution, let us proclaim to them that we feel as they feel, and that, with them, we are determined to live or die like freemen.

Surely, sir, we need no long or learned lectures about the nature of government, and the influence of property or ranks on society. We may content ourselves with studying the true character of our own people, and with knowing that the interests are confided to us of a nation capable of doing and suffering all things for its liberty. Such a nation, if its rulers be faithful, must be invincible. I well remember an observation made to me by the most illustrious female of the age, if not of her sex.[9] All history showed, she said, that a nation was never conquered. No, sir, no united nation, that resolves to be free, can be conquered. And has it come to this? Are we so humbled, so low, so debased, that we dare not express our sympathy for suffering Greece, that we dare not articulate our detestation of the brutal excesses of which she has been the bleeding victim, lest we might offend some one or more of their imperial and royal majesties? If gentlemen are afraid to act rashly on such a subject, suppose, Mr. Chairman, that we unite in an humble petition, addressed to their majesties, beseeching them, that of their gracious condescension, they would allow us to express our feelings and our sympathies. How shall it run? "We, the representatives of the *free* people of the United States of America, humbly approach the thrones of your imperial and royal majesties, and supplicate that, of your imperial and royal clemency—" I cannot go through the disgusting recital; my lips have not yet learned to pronounce the sycophantic language of a degraded slave! Are we so mean, so base, so despicable, that we may not attempt to express our horror, utter our indignation, at the most brutal and atrocious war that ever stained earth or shocked high heaven; at the ferocious deeds of a savage and infuriated soldiery, stimulated and urged on by the clergy of a fanatical and inimical religion, and rioting in all the excesses of blood and butchery, at the mere details of which the heart sickens and recoils!

If the great body of Christendom can look on calmly and coolly, whilst all this is perpetrated on a Christian people, in its own immediate vicinity, in its very presence, let us at least evince, that one of its remote extremities is susceptible of sensibility to Christian wrongs, and capable of sympathy for Christian sufferings; that in this remote quarter of the world there are hearts not yet closed against compassion for human woes, that can pour out their indignant feelings at the oppression of a people endeared to us by every ancient recollection, and every modern tie. Sir, attempts have been made to alarm the committee by the dangers to our commerce in the Mediterranean; and a wretched invoice of figs and opium has been spread before us to repress our sensibilities and to eradicate our humanity. Ah! sir, "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" or what shall it avail a nation to save the whole of a miserable trade, and lose its liberties?

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[9] Madame de Staël, a celebrated French writer (1766-1817).

On the subject of the other independent American states, hitherto it has not been necessary to depart from the rule of our foreign relations, observed in regard to Europe. Whether it will become us to do so or not, will be considered when we take up another resolution, lying on the table. But we may not only adopt this measure: we may go further; we may recognize the government in the Morea,[10] if actually independent, and it will be neither war, nor cause of war, nor any violation of our neutrality. Besides, sir, what is Greece to the allies? A part of the dominions of any of them? By no means. Suppose the people in one of the Philippine Isles, or any other spot still more insulated and remote, in Asia or Africa, were to resist their former rulers, and set up and establish a new government, are we not to recognize them, in dread of the holy allies? If they are going to interfere, from the danger of the contagion of the example, here is the spot, our own favored land, where they must strike. *This* Government, you, Mr. Chairman, and the body over which you preside, are the living and cutting reproach to allied despotism. If we are to offend them, it is not by passing this resolution. We are daily and hourly giving them cause of war. It is *here,* and in our free institutions, that they will assail us. They will attack us because you sit beneath that canopy, and we are freely debating and deliberating upon the great interests of freemen, and dispensing the blessings of free government. They will strike, because we pass one of those bills on your table. The passage of the least of them, by our free authority, is more galling to despotic powers, than would be the adoption of this so much dreaded resolution. Pass it, and what do you do? You exercise an indisputable attribute of sovereignty, for which you are responsible to none of them. You do the same when you perform any other legislative function; no less. If the allies object to this measure, let them forbid us to take a vote in this House; let them strip us of every attribute of independent government; let them disperse us.

Will gentlemen attempt to maintain that, on the principles of the law of nations, those allies would have *cause* of war? If there be any principle which has been settled for ages, any which is founded in the very nature of things, it is that every independent state has the clear right to judge of the *fact* of the existence of other sovereign powers. I admit that there may be a state of inchoate initiative sovereignty, in which a new government, just struggling into being, cannot be said yet perfectly to exist. But the premature recognition of such new government can give offense justly to no other than its ancient sovereign. The right of recognition comprehends the right to be informed; and the means of information must, of necessity, depend upon the sound discretion of the party seeking it. You may send out a commission of inquiry, and charge it with a provident attention to your own people and your own interests. Such will be the character of the proposed agency. It will not necessarily follow, that any public functionary will be appointed by the president. You merely grant the means by which the executive may act when *he* thinks proper. What does he tell you in his message? That Greece is contending for her independence; that all sympathize with her; and that no power has declared against her. Pass this resolution, and what is the reply which it conveys to him? "You have sent us grateful intelligence; we feel warmly for Greece, and we grant you money, that, when you shall think it proper, when the interests of this nation shall not be jeoparded, you may depute a commissioner or public agent to Greece." The whole responsibility is then left where the Constitution puts it. A member in his place may make a speech or proposition, the House may even pass a vote, in respect to our foreign affairs, which the President, with the whole field lying full before him, would not deem it expedient to effectuate.

But, sir, it is not for Greece alone that I desire to see this measure adopted. It will give to her but little support, and that purely of a moral kind. It is principally for America, for the credit and character of our common country, for our own unsullied name, that I hope to see it pass. Mr. Chairman, what appearance on the page of history would a record like this exhibit? "In the month of January, in the year of our Lord and Saviour, 1824, while all European Christendom beheld, with cold and unfeeling indifference, the unexampled wrongs and inexpressible misery of Christian Greece, a proposition was made in the Congress of the United States, almost the sole, the last, the greatest depository of human hope and human freedom, the representatives of a gallant nation, containing a million of freemen ready to fly to arms, while the people of that nation were spontaneously expressing its deep-toned feeling, and the whole continent, by one simultaneous emotion, was rising, and solemnly and anxiously supplicating and invoking high Heaven to spare and succor Greece, and to invigorate her arms in her glorious cause, while temples and senate houses were alike resounding with one burst of generous and holy sympathy; in the year of our Lord and Saviour, that Saviour of Greece and of us; a proposition was offered in the American Congress to send a messenger to Greece, to inquire into her state and condition, with a kind expression of our good wishes and our sympathies—and it was rejected!" Go home, if you can—go home if you dare, to your constituents, and tell them that you voted it down—meet, if you can, the appalling countenances of those who sent you here, and tell them that you shrank from the declaration of your own sentiments —that you cannot tell how, but that some unknown dread, some indescribable apprehension, some indefinable danger, drove you from your purpose—that the specters of scimitars, and crowns, and crescents, gleamed before you and alarmed you; and that you suppressed all the noble feelings prompted by religion, by liberty, by national independence, and by humanity. I cannot bring myself to believe that such will be the feeling of a majority of the committee. But, for myself, though every friend of the cause should desert it, and I be left to stand alone with the gentleman from Massachusetts, I will give to his resolution the poor sanction of my unqualified approbation.

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[10] A modern name for the Peloponnesus.

1824 1824

JOHN CALDWELL CALHOUN

Born, Abbeville District, South Carolina, 1782, died, Washington, 1850. Calhoun was graduated from Yale in 1804, studied and practiced law and soon entered politics. He was in Congress from South Carolina, 1811-1817, secretary of war, 1817-1825, vice-president of the United States, 1825-1832. He served in the Senate from 1832 to 1843, was secretary of state, 1844-1845, and from 1845 until his death was the chief spokesman for the South before the Civil War. His *Works*, consisting of state papers and orations, were first published in 1853.

SPEECH ON THE FORCE BILL[1]

FEBRUARY 15TH AND 16TH, 1833

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Having made these remarks, the great question is now presented, Has Congress the right to pass this bill? which I will next proceed to consider. The decision of this question involves an inquiry into the provisions of the bill. What are they? It puts at the disposal of the President the army and navy, and the entire militia of the country; it enables him, at his pleasure, to subject every man in the United States, not exempt from militia duty, to martial law; to call him from his ordinary occupation to the field, and under the penalty of fine and imprisonment, inflicted by a court martial, to imbrue his hand in his brother's blood. There is no limitation on the power of the sword;—and that over the purse is equally without restraint; for among the extraordinary features of the bill, it contains no appropriation, which, under existing circumstances, is tantamount to an unlimited appropriation. The President may, under its authority, incur any expenditure, and pledge the national faith to meet it. He may create a new national debt, at the very moment of the termination of the former—a debt of millions, to be paid out of the proceeds of the labor of that section of the country whose dearest constitutional rights this bill prostrates! Thus exhibiting the extraordinary spectacle, that the very section of the country which is urging this measure, and carrying the sword of devastation against us, is, at the same time, incurring a new debt, to be paid by those whose rights are violated; while those who violate them are to receive the benefits, in the shape of bounties and expenditures.

And for what purpose is the unlimited control of the purse and of the sword thus placed at the disposition of the Executive? To make war against one of the free and sovereign members of this confederation, which the bill proposes to deal with, not as a State, but as a collection of banditti or outlaws. Thus exhibiting the impious spectacle of this Government, the creature of the States, making war against the power to which it owes its existence.

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[1] In this speech, Calhoun was defending the action of his state in resisting the tariff act of Congress of July 14th, 1832, imposing, for revenue and protection, duties upon various articles of imported merchandise. As agriculture was the chief resource of the South and manufacture that of the North, tariff for protection would especially benefit the North. Opposition in South Carolina to this act brought before Congress what was called the Force Bill, authorizing the President to use military force if necessary to enforce the tariff act. It was upon this bill that Calhoun was speaking. He had discussed at some length the tariff laws of 1816 and 1828, had said that South Carolina was loyal to the Union, that it did not deny the right of the Federal Government to lay duties on imports for revenue, but did deny its right to lay them for the protection of manufactures: that the public debt had been paid; and that this new impost duty would cause a large and dangerous surplus in the treasury. He then continued as above.

The bill violates the Constitution, plainly and palpably,[2] in many of its provisions, by authorizing the President at his pleasure, to place the different ports of this Union on an unequal footing,[3] contrary to that provision of the Constitution which declares that no preference shall be given to one port over another. It also violates the Constitution by authorizing him, at his discretion, to impose cash duties on one port, while credit is allowed in others; by enabling the President to regulate commerce, a power vested in Congress alone; and by drawing within the jurisdiction of the United States courts, powers never intended to be conferred on them. As great as these objections are, they become insignificant in the provisions of a bill which, by a single blow—by treating the States as a mere lawless mass of individuals—prostrates all the barriers of the Constitution. I will pass over the minor considerations, and proceed directly to the great point. This bill proceeds on the ground that the entire sovereignty of this country belongs to the American people, as forming one great community, and regards the States as mere fractions or counties,[4] and not as integral parts of the Union; having no more right to resist the encroachments of the Government than a county has to resist the authority of a State; and treating such resistance as the lawless acts of so many individuals, without possessing sovereignty or political rights. It has been said that the bill declares war against South Carolina. No. It decrees a massacre of her citizens! War has something ennobling about it, and, with all its horrors, brings into action the highest qualities, intellectual and moral. It was, perhaps, in the order of Providence that it should be permitted for that very purpose. But this bill declares no war, except, indeed, it be that which savages wage—a war, not against the community, but the citizens of whom that community is composed. But I regard it as worse than savage warfare—as an attempt to take away life under the color of law, without the trial by jury, or any other safeguard which the Constitution has thrown around the life of the citizen! It authorizes the President, or even his deputies, when they may suppose the law to be violated, without the intervention of a court or jury, to kill without mercy or discrimination!

It has been said by the Senator from Tennessee [Mr. Grundy] to be a measure of peace! Yes, such peace as the wolf gives to the lamb—the kite to the dove! Such peace as Russia gives to Poland,[5] or death to its victim! A peace, by extinguishing the political existence of the State, by awing her into an abandonment of the exercise of every power which constitutes her a sovereign community. It is to South Carolina a question of self-preservation; and I proclaim it, that, should this bill pass, and an attempt be made to enforce it, it will be resisted, at every hazard—even that of death itself. Death is not the greatest calamity: there are others still more terrible to the free and brave, and among them may be placed the loss of liberty and honor. There are thousands of her brave sons who, if need be, are prepared cheerfully to lay down their lives in defense of the State, and the great principles of constitutional liberty for which she is contending. God forbid that this should become necessary! It never can be, unless this Government is resolved to bring the question to extremity, when her gallant sons will stand prepared to perform the last duty—to die nobly.

I go on the ground that this Constitution was made by the States; that it is a federal union of the States, in which the several States still retain their sovereignty. If these views be correct, I have not characterized the bill too strongly; and the question is, whether they be or be not. I will not enter into the discussion of this question now. I will rest it, for the present, on what I have said on the introduction of the resolutions now on the table,[6] under a hope that another opportunity will be afforded for more ample discussion. I will, for the present, confine my remarks to the objections which have been raised to the views which I presented when I introduced them. The authority of Luther Martin[7] has been adduced by the Senator from Delaware, to prove that the citizens of a state, acting under the authority of a state, are liable to be punished as traitors by this government. Eminent as Mr. Martin was as a lawyer, and high as his authority may be considered on a legal point, I cannot accept it in determining the point at issue. The attitude which he occupied, if taken into view, would lessen, if not destroy, the weight of his authority. He had been violently opposed in convention to the Constitution, and the very letter from which the Senator has quoted was intended to dissuade Maryland from its adoption. With this view, it was to be expected that every consideration calculated to effect that object should be urged; that real objections should be exaggerated; and that those having no foundation, except mere plausible deductions, should be presented. It is to this spirit that I attribute the opinion of Mr. Martin in reference to the point under consideration. But if his authority be good on one point, it must be admitted to be equally so on another. If his opinion be sufficient to prove that a citizen of a State may be punished as a traitor when acting under allegiance to the State, it is also sufficient to show that no authority was intended to be given in the Constitution for the protection of manufactures by the general Government, and that the provision in the Constitution permitting a State to lay an impost duty,[8] with the consent of Congress, was intended to reserve the right of protection to the States themselves, and that each State should protect its own industry. Assuming his opinion to be of equal authority on both points, how embarrassing would be the attitude in which it would place the Senator from Delaware, and those with whom he is acting—that of using the sword and bayonet to enforce the execution of an unconstitutional act of Congress. I must express my surprise that the slightest authority in favor of *power* should be received as the most conclusive evidence, while that which is, at least, equally strong in favor of right and *liberty*, is wholly overlooked or rejected.

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[2] Those interested in the arguments on the other side may read Webster's speech in reply, which follows this. It should be remembered that the doctrines of nullification and secession were not uncommon. New England, even, had thought of the possibility of seceding. Cf. Lowell, *Biglow Papers*, First Series, I., last stanza.

[3] The bill authorized the President in case of unlawful obstruction, to move a customhouse to a secure port.

[4] In 1917 this has come to be the generally accepted belief.

[5] In 1772, 1793, 1795, and again in 1814, Prussia, Austria, and Russia partitioned Poland among themselves. A Polish revolution in 1830-31 was put down by a large Russian army, and in 1832 Poland was declared a Russian province.

[6] Calhoun had submitted on Jan. 22, 1833, a series of resolutions against the Force Bill, and he had, in the first part of his speech here quoted, and in other speeches, discussed the relation of the Federal Government to the states.

Notwithstanding all that has been said, I may say that neither the Senator from Delaware [Mr. Clayton], nor any other who has spoken on the same side, has directly and fairly met the great questions at issue: Is this a federal union? a union of States, as distinct from that of individuals? Is the sovereignty in the several States, or in the American people in the aggregate? The very language which we are compelled to use when speaking of our political institutions, affords proof conclusive as to its real character. The terms union, federal, united, all imply a combination of sovereignties, a confederation of States. They are never applied to an association of individuals. Who ever heard of the United State of New York, of Massachusetts, or of Virginia? Who ever heard the term federal or union applied to the aggregation of individuals into one community? Nor is the other point less clear—that the sovereignty is in the several States, and that our system is a union of twenty-four sovereign powers, under a constitutional compact, and not of a divided sovereignty between the States severally and the United States. In spite of all that has been said, I maintain that sovereignty is in its nature indivisible. It is the supreme power in a State, and we might just as well speak of half a square, or half of a triangle, as of half a sovereignty. It is a gross error to confound the *exercise* of sovereign powers with *sovereignty* itself, or the *delegation* of such powers with the *surrender* of them. A sovereign may delegate his powers to be exercised by as many agents as he may think proper, under such conditions and with such limitations as he may impose; but to surrender any portion of his sovereignty to another is to annihilate the whole. The Senator from Delaware [Mr. Clayton] calls this metaphysical reasoning, which he says he cannot comprehend. If by metaphysics he means that scholastic refinement which makes distinctions without difference, no one can hold it in more utter contempt than I do; but if, on the contrary, he means the power of analysis and combination—that power which reduces the most complex idea into its elements, which traces causes to their first principle, and, by the power of generalization and combination, unites the whole in one harmonious system—then, so far from deserving contempt, it is the highest attribute of the human mind. It is the power which raises man above the brute—which distinguishes his faculties from mere sagacity, which he holds in common with inferior animals. It is this power which has raised the astronomer from being a mere gazer at the stars to the high intellectual eminence of a Newton or a Laplace,[9] and astronomy itself from a mere observation of insulated facts into that noble science which displays to our admiration the system of the universe. And shall this high power of the mind, which has effected such wonders when directed to the laws which control the material world, be for ever prohibited, under a senseless cry of metaphysics, from being applied to the high purpose of political science and legislation? I hold them to be subject to laws as fixed as matter itself, and to be as fit a subject for the application of the highest intellectual power. Denunciation may, indeed, fall upon the philosophical inquirer into these first principles, as it did upon Galileo and Bacon[10] when they first unfolded the great discoveries which have immortalized their names; but the time will come when truth will prevail in spite of prejudice and denunciation, and when politics and legislation will be considered as much a science as astronomy and chemistry.

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[7] A member of the Constitutional Convention of 1787 from Maryland, who had strongly opposed the centralization of power in the Federal Government and had even refused to sign the Constitution.

[8] "No State shall, without consent of the Congress, lay any imposts or duties on imports or exports except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection laws." Art. 1. Section 10 of the Constitution.

In connection with this part of the subject, I understood the Senator from Virginia [Mr. Rives] to say that sovereignty was divided, and that a portion remained with the States severally, and that the residue was vested in the Union. By Union, I suppose the Senator meant the United States. If such be his meaning—if he intended to affirm that the sovereignty was in the twenty-four States, in whatever light he may view them, our opinions will not disagree; but according to my conception, the whole sovereignty is in the several States, while the exercise of sovereign powers is divided—a part being exercised under compact, through this general Government, and the residue through the separate State Governments. But if the Senator from Virginia [Mr. Rives] means to assert that the twenty-four States form but one community, with a single sovereign power as to the objects of the Union, it will be but the revival of the old question, of whether the Union is a union between States, as distinct communities, or a mere aggregate of the American people, as a mass of individuals; and in this light his opinions would lead directly to consolidation.

But to return to the bill. It is said that the bill ought to pass, because the law must be enforced. The law must be enforced! The imperial edict must be executed! It is under such sophistry, couched in general terms, without looking to the limitations which must ever exist in the practical exercise of power, that the most cruel and despotic acts ever have been covered. It was such sophistry as this that cast Daniel into the lion's den, and the three Innocents into the fiery furnace.[11] Under the same sophistry the bloody edicts of Nero and Caligula[12] were executed. The law must be enforced. Yes, the act imposing the "tea-tax must be executed." This was the very argument which impelled Lord North and his administration to that mad career which forever separated us from the British crown. Under a similar sophistry, "that religion must be protected," how many massacres have been perpetrated? and how many martyrs have been tied to the stake? What! acting on this vague abstraction, are you prepared to enforce a law without considering whether it be just or unjust, constitutional or unconstitutional? Will you collect money when it is acknowledged that it is not wanted? He who earns the money, who digs it from the earth with the sweat of his brow, has a just title to it against the universe. No one has a right to touch it without his consent except his government, and this only to the extent of its legitimate wants; to take more is robbery, and you propose by this bill to enforce robbery by murder. Yes: to this result you must come, by this miserable sophistry, this vague abstraction of enforcing the law, without a regard to the fact whether the law be just or unjust, constitutional or unconstitutional.

In the same spirit, we are told that the Union must be preserved, without regard to the means. And how is it proposed to preserve the Union? By force! Does any man in his senses believe that this beautiful structure—this harmonious aggregate of States, produced by the joint consent of all—can be preserved by force? Its very introduction will be certain destruction to this Federal Union. No, no. You cannot keep the States united in their constitutional and federal bonds by force. Force may, indeed, hold the parts together, but such union would be the bond between master and slave—a union

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r Isaac Newton, 1642-1727, discovered the law of gravitation. Laplace, 1749-1827, was a noted French astronomer.

alileo, 1564-1642, the great Italian astronomer, was threatened with torture by the Inquisition. Sir Francis Bacon, 1561-1626, who was one of the first exponents of the inductive or experimental method of reasoning as opposed to the deductive, was ridiculed by many learned men.

[11] *Daniel* iii. 20; vi. 16.

[12] Two of the most cruel of the Roman emperors.

of exaction on one side and of unqualified *obedience* on the other. That *obedience* which, we are told by the Senator from Pennsylvania [Mr. Wilkins], is the Union! Yes, exaction on the side of the master; for this very bill is intended to collect what can be no longer called taxes—the voluntary contribution of a free people—but tribute—tribute to be collected under the mouths of the cannon! Your custom-house is already transferred to a garrison, and that garrison with its batteries turned, not against the enemy of your country, but on subjects (I will not say citizens), on whom you propose to levy contributions. Has reason fled from our borders? Have we ceased to reflect? It is madness to suppose that the Union can be preserved by force. I tell you plainly, that the bill, should it pass, cannot be enforced. It will prove only a blot upon your statute-book, a reproach to the year, and a disgrace to the American Senate. I repeat, it will not be executed; it will rouse the dormant spirit of the people, and open their eyes to the approach of despotism. The country has sunk into avarice and political corruption, from which nothing can arouse it but some measure, on the part of the Government, of folly and madness, such as that now under consideration.[13]

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[*Second Day*]

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Having supplied the omissions of yesterday, I now resume the subject at the point where my remarks then terminated. The Senate will remember that I stated, at their close, that the great question at issue is, whether ours is a federal or a consolidated system of government; a system in which the parts, to use the emphatic language of Mr. Palgrave,[14] are the integers, and the whole the multiple, or in which the whole is an unit and the parts the fractions. I stated, that on the decision of this question, I believed, depend not only the liberty and prosperity of this country, but the place which we are destined to hold in the intellectual and moral scale of nations. I stated, also, in my remarks on this point, that there is a striking analogy between this and the great struggle between Persia and Greece, which was decided by the battles of Marathon, Platæa, and Salamis, and which immortalized the names of Miltiades and Themistocles. I illustrated this analogy by showing that centralism or consolidation, with the exception of a few nations along the eastern borders of the Mediterranean, has been the pervading principle in the Asiatic governments, while the federal system, or what is the same in principle, that system which organizes a community in reference to its parts, has prevailed in Europe.[15] . . .

But to return to the point immediately under consideration. I know that it is not only the opinion of a large majority of our country, but it may be said to be the opinion of the age, that the very beau ideal of a perfect government is the government of a majority, acting through a representative body, without check or limitation on its power; yet, if we may test this theory by experience and reason, we shall find that, so far from being perfect, the necessary tendency of all governments, based upon the will of an absolute majority, without constitutional check or limitation of power, is to faction, corruption, anarchy, and despotism; and this, whether the will of the majority be expressed directly through an assembly of the people themselves, or by their representatives. I know that, in venturing this assertion, I utter what is unpopular both within and without these walls; but where truth and liberty are concerned, such considerations should not be regarded. I will place the decision of this point on the fact that no government of the kind, among the many attempts which have been made, has ever endured for a single generation, but, on the contrary has invariably experienced the fate which I have assigned to it. Let a single instance be pointed out, and I will surrender my opinion. But, if we had not the aid of experience to direct our judgment, reason itself would be a certain guide. The view which considers the community as an unit, and all its parts as having a similar interest, is radically erroneous. However small the community may be, and however homogeneous its interests, the moment that government is put into operation—as soon as it begins to collect taxes and to make appropriations, the different portions of the community must, of necessity, bear different and opposing relations in reference to the action of the government. There must inevitably spring up two interests—a direction and a stockholder interest—an interest profiting by the action of the government, and interested in increasing its powers and action; and another, at whose expense the political machine is kept in motion. I know how difficult it is to communicate distinct ideas on such a subject, through the medium of general propositions, without particular illustration; and in order that I may be distinctly understood, though at the hazard of being tedious, I will illustrate the important principle which I have ventured to advance, by examples.

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[13] Calhoun, in closing his speech of the first day, criticized the stand taken by several senators, repeated the statement that the question was whether there was to be power or liberty, a federal government or a "consolidated one." On the second day, after repeating that the action of South Carolina was not directed against revenue, but against protection, but that the two were so blended that it was impossible to discriminate between them, Calhoun proceeded as above.

[14] Sir Francis Palgrave, 1788-1861, an English historian.

[15] In the omitted paragraph the government of the twelve tribes of Israel is used as an illustration of the evils of a too centralized government.

Let us, then, suppose a small community of five persons, separated from the rest of the world; and, to make the example strong, let us suppose them all to be engaged in the same pursuit, and to be of equal wealth. Let us further suppose that they determine to govern the community by the will of a majority; and, to make the case as strong as possible, let us suppose that the majority, in order to meet the expenses of the government, lay an equal tax, say of one hundred dollars on each individual of this little community. Their treasury would contain five hundred dollars. Three are a majority; and they, by supposition, have contributed three hundred as their portion, and the other two (the minority), two hundred. The three have the right to make the appropriations as they may think proper. The question is, How would the principle of the absolute and unchecked majority operate, under these circumstances, in this little community? If the three be governed by a sense of justice—if they should appropriate the money to the objects for which it was raised, the common and equal benefit of the five, then the object of the association would be fairly and honestly effected, and each would have a common interest in the government. But, should the majority pursue an opposite course—should they appropriate the money in a manner to benefit their own particular interest, without regard to the interest of the two (and that they will so act, unless there be some efficient check, he who best knows human nature will least doubt), who does not see that the three and the two would have directly opposite interests in reference to the action of the government? The three who contribute to the common treasury but three hundred dollars, could, in fact, by appropriating the five hundred to their own use, convert the action of the government into the means of making money, and, of consequence, would have a direct interest in increasing the taxes. They put in three hundred and take out five; that is, they take back to themselves all that they put in, and, in addition, that which was put in by their associates; or, in other words, taking taxation and appropriation together, they have gained, and their associates have lost, two hundred dollars by the fiscal action of the government. Opposite interests, in reference to the action of the government, are thus created between them: the one having an interest in favor, and the other against the taxes; the one to increase, and the other to decrease the taxes; the one to retain the taxes when the money is no longer wanted, and the other to repeal them when the objects for which they were levied have been secured.

Let us now suppose this community of five to be raised to twenty-four individuals, to be governed, in like manner, by the will of a majority: it is obvious that the same principle would divide them into two interests—into a majority and a minority, thirteen against eleven, or in some other proportion; and that all the consequences which I have shown to be applicable to the small community of five would be applicable to the greater, the cause not depending upon the number, but resulting necessarily from the action of the government itself. Let us now suppose that, instead of governing themselves directly in an assembly of the whole, without the intervention of agents, they should adopt the representative principle; and that, instead of being governed by a majority of themselves, they should be governed by a majority of their representatives. It is obvious that the operation of the system would not be affected by the change: the representatives being responsible to those who chose them, would conform to the will of their constituents, and would act as they would do were they present and acting for themselves; and the same conflict of interest, which we have shown would exist in one case, would equally exist in the other. In either case, the inevitable result would be a system of hostile legislation on the part of the majority, or the stronger interest, against the minority, or the weaker interest; the object of which, on the part of the former, would be to exact as much as possible from the latter, which would necessarily be resisted by all the means in their power. Warfare, by legislation, would thus be commenced between the parties, with the same object, and not less hostile than that which is carried on between distinct and rival nations—the only distinction would be in the instruments and the mode. Enactments, in the one case, would supply what could only be effected by arms in the other; and the inevitable operation would be to engender the most hostile feelings between the parties, which would merge every feeling of patriotism—that feeling which embraces the whole—and substitute in its place the most violent party attachment; and instead of having one common center of attachment, around which the affections of the community might rally, there would in fact be two—the interests of the majority, to which those who constitute that majority would be more attached than they would be to the whole,—and that of the minority, to which they, in like manner, would also be more attached than to the interests of the whole. Faction would thus take the place of patriotism; and, with the loss of patriotism, corruption must necessarily follow, and in its train, anarchy, and, finally, despotism, or the establishment of absolute power in a single individual, as a means of arresting the conflict of hostile interests; on the principle that it is better to submit to the will of a single individual, who by being made lord and master of the whole community, would have an equal interest in the protection of all the parts.

Let us next suppose that, in order to avert the calamitous train of consequences, this little community should adopt a written constitution, with limitations restricting the will of the majority, in order to protect the minority against the oppression which I have shown would necessarily result without such restrictions. It is obvious that the case would not be in the slightest degree varied, if the majority be left in possession of the right of judging exclusively of the extent of its powers, without any right on the part of the minority to enforce the restrictions imposed by the constitution on the will of the majority. The point is almost too clear for illustration. Nothing can be more certain than that, when a constitution grants power, and imposes limitations on the exercise of that power, whatever interests may obtain possession of the government, will be in favor of extending the power at the expense of the limitation; and that, unless those in whose behalf the limitations were imposed have, in some form or mode, the right of enforcing them, the power will ultimately supersede the limitation, and the government must operate precisely in the same manner as if the will of the majority governed without constitution or limitation of power.

I have thus presented all possible modes in which a government founded upon the will of an absolute majority will be modified; and have demonstrated that, in all its forms, whether in a majority of the people, as in a mere democracy, or in a majority of their representatives, without a constitution or with a constitution, to be interpreted as the will of the majority, the result will be the same: two hostile interests will inevitably be created by the action of the government, to be followed by hostile legislation, and that by faction, corruption, anarchy, and despotism.

The great and solemn question here presents itself, Is there any remedy for these evils? on the decision of which depends the question, whether the people can govern themselves, which has been so often asked with so much skepticism and doubt. There is a remedy, and but one,—the effect of which, whatever may be the form, is to organize society in reference to this conflict of interests, which springs out of the action of government; and which can only be done by giving to each part the right of self-protection; which, in a word, instead of considering the community of twenty-four a single community, having a common interest, and to be governed by the single will of an entire majority, shall upon all questions tending to bring the parts into conflict, the thirteen against the eleven, take the will, not of the twenty-four as a unit, but that of the thirteen and that of the eleven separately,—the majority of each governing the parts, and where they concur, governing the whole,—and where they disagree, arresting the action of the government. This I will call the concurring, as distinct from the absolute majority. It would not be, as was generally supposed, a minority governing a majority. In either way the number would be the same, whether taken as the absolute or as the concurring majority. Thus, the majority of the thirteen is seven, and of the eleven six; and the two together make thirteen, which is the majority of twenty-four. But, though the number is the same, the mode of counting is essentially different: the one representing the strongest interest, and the other, the entire interests of the community. The first mistake is, in supposing that the government of the absolute majority is the government of this people—that beau ideal of a perfect government which has been so enthusiastically entertained in every age by the generous and patriotic, where civilization and liberty have made the smallest progress. There can be no greater error: the government of the people is the government of the whole community—of the twenty-four—the self-government of all the parts—too perfect to be reduced to practice in the present, or any past stage of human society. The government of the absolute majority, instead of being the government of the people, is but the government of the strongest interests, and, when not efficiently checked, is the most tyrannical and oppressive that can be devised. Between this ideal perfection on one side, and despotism on the other, no other system can be devised but that which considers society in reference to its parts, as differently affected by the action of the government, and which takes the sense of each part separately, and thereby the sense of the whole, in the manner already illustrated.

These principles, as I have already stated, are not affected by the number of which the community may be composed, and are just as applicable to one of thirteen millions—the number which composes ours—as of the small community of twenty-four, which I have supposed for the purpose of illustration; and are not less applicable to the twenty-four States united in one community, than to the case of the twenty-four individuals. There is, indeed, a distinction between a large and a small community, not affecting the principle, but the violence of the action. In the former, the similarity of the interests of all the parts will limit the oppression from the hostile action of the parts, in a great degree, to the fiscal action of the government merely; but in the large community, spreading over a country of great extent, and having a great diversity of interests, with different kinds of labor, capital, and production, the conflict and oppression will extend not only to a monopoly of the appropriations on the part of the stronger interests, but will end in unequal taxes, and a general conflict between the entire interests of conflicting sections, which, if not arrested by the most powerful checks, will terminate in the most oppressive tyranny that can be conceived, or in the destruction of the community itself.

If we turn our attention from these supposed cases, and direct it to our Government and its actual operation, we shall find a practical confirmation of the truth of what has been stated, not only of the oppressive operation of the system of an absolute majority, but also a striking and beautiful illustration, in the formation of our system, of the principle of the concurring majority, as distinct from the absolute, which I have asserted to be the only means of efficiently checking the abuse of power, and, of course, the only solid foundation of constitutional liberty. That our Government, for many years, has been gradually verging to consolidation; that the Constitution has gradually become a dead letter; and that all restrictions upon the power of government have been virtually removed, so as practically to convert the general Government into a government of an absolute majority, without check or limitation, cannot be denied by any one who has impartially observed its operation.

It is not necessary to trace the commencement and gradual progress of the causes which have produced this change in our system; it is sufficient to state that the change has taken place within the last few years. What has been the result? Precisely that which might have been anticipated: the growth of faction, corruption, anarchy, and, if not despotism itself, its near approach, as witnessed in the provisions of this bill. And from what have these consequences sprung? We have been involved in no war. We have been at peace with all the world. We have been visited with no national calamity. Our people have been advancing in general intelligence, and, I will add, as great and alarming as has been the advance of political corruption among the mercenary corps who look to government for support, the morals and virtue of the community at large have been advancing in improvement. What, I again repeat, is the cause? No other can be assigned but a departure from the fundamental principles of the Constitution, which has converted the Government into the will of an absolute and irresponsible majority, and which, by the laws that must inevitably govern in all such majorities, has placed in conflict the great interests of the country, by a system of hostile legislation, by an oppressive and unequal imposition of taxes, by unequal and profuse appropriations, and by rendering the entire labor and capital of the weaker interest subordinate to the stronger.[16]

. . . .

To maintain the ascendency of the Constitution over the law-making majority is the great and essential point, on which the success of the system must depend. Unless that ascendency can be preserved, the necessary consequence must be, that the laws will supersede the Constitution; and, finally, the will of the Executive, by the influence of his patronage, will supersede the laws—indications of which are already perceptible. This ascendency can only be preserved through the action of the States as organized bodies, having their own separate governments, and possessed of the right, under the structure of our system, of judging of the extent of their separate powers, and of interposing their authority to arrest the unauthorized enactments of the general Government within their respective limits. I will not enter, at this time, into the discussion of this important point, as it has been ably and fully presented by the Senator from Kentucky [Mr. Bibb], and others who preceded him in this debate on the same side, whose arguments not only remain unanswered, but are unanswerable. It is only by this power of interposition that the reserved rights of the States can be peacefully and efficiently protected against the encroachments of the general Government—that the limitations imposed upon its authority can be enforced, and its movements confined to the orbit allotted to it by the Constitution.[17]

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[16] There follows a more definite summary of the political corruptions of the time, and a reiteration of the statement that the rule of the absolute majority is the cause of this corruption.

. . . .

But, to return to the general Government. We have now sufficient experience to ascertain that the tendency to conflict in its action is between the southern and other sections. The latter having a decided majority, must habitually be possessed of the powers of the Government, both in this and in the other House; and, being governed by that instinctive love of power so natural to the human breast, they must become the advocates of the power of Government, and in the same degree opposed to the limitations; while the other and weaker section is as necessarily thrown on the side of the limitations. One section is the natural guardian of the delegated powers, and the other of the reserved; and the struggle on the side of the former will be to enlarge the powers, while that on the opposite side will be to restrain them within their constitutional limits. The contest will, in fact, be a contest between power and liberty, and such I consider the present—a contest in which the weaker section, with its peculiar labor, productions, and institutions, has at stake all that can be dear to freemen. Should we be able to maintain in their full vigor our reserved rights, liberty and prosperity will be our portion; but if we yield, and permit the stronger interest to concentrate within itself all the powers of the Government, then will our fate be more wretched than that of the aborigines whom we have expelled. In this great struggle between the delegated and reserved powers, so far from repining that my lot, and that of those whom I represent, is cast on the side of the latter, I rejoice that such is the fact; for, though we participate in but few of the advantages of the Government, we are compensated, and more than compensated, in not being so much exposed to its corruption. Nor do I repine that the duty, so difficult to be discharged, of defending the reserved powers against apparently such fearful odds, has been assigned to us. To discharge successfully requires the highest qualities, moral and intellectual; and should we perform it with a zeal and ability in proportion to its magnitude, instead of being mere planters, our section will become distinguished for its patriots and statesmen. But, on the other hand, if we prove unworthy of the trust—if we yield to the steady encroachment of power, the severest calamity and most debasing corruption will overspread the land. Every Southern man, true to the interests of his section, and faithful to the duties which Providence has allotted him, will be forever excluded from the honors and emoluments of this Government, which will be reserved for those only who have qualified themselves, by political prostitution, for admission into the *Magdalen* Asylum.

1833 1833

DANIEL WEBSTER

Born, Franklin, New Hampshire, 1782, died, Marshfield, Massachusetts, 1852. Webster was born in poverty, the son of a farmer, but graduated from Dartmouth, 1801. He studied and practiced law, entered politics in Massachusetts, was congressman and senator, 1823-1841, and 1845-1850. He was twice secretary of state, and would undoubtedly have been made President had not his "compromise stand" displeased both North and South. Webster's chief orations were on the Dartmouth College case in the Supreme Court of the United States, 1818; the Bunker Hill Monument oration, 1825; the speech in reply to Senator Hayne, 1830; the speech maintaining that the Constitution is not a compact, 1833; and the speech for the Constitution and the Union, March, 1850.

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[17] Calhoun here draws a parallel from Roman history.

THE CONSTITUTION NOT A COMPACT BETWEEN SOVEREIGN STATES*[1]

. . . .

And now sir, against all these theories and opinions, I maintain,—

1. That the Constitution of the United States is not a league, confederacy, or compact between the people of the several States in their sovereign capacities; but a government proper, founded on the adoption of the people, and creating direct relations between itself and individuals.

2. That no State authority has power to dissolve these relations; that nothing can dissolve them but revolution; and that, consequently, there can be no such thing as secession without revolution.

3. That there is a supreme law, consisting of the Constitution of the United States, and acts of Congress passed in pursuance of it, and treaties; and that, in cases not capable of assuming the character of a suit in law or equity, Congress must judge of, and finally interpret, this supreme law so often as it has occasion to pass acts of legislation; and in cases capable of assuming, and actually assuming, the character of a suit, the Supreme Court of the United States is the final interpreter.

4. That an attempt by a State to abrogate, annul, or nullify an act of Congress, or to arrest its operation within her limits, on the ground that, in her opinion, such law is unconstitutional, is a direct usurpation on the just powers of the general Government, and on the equal rights of other States; a plain violation of the Constitution, and a proceeding essentially revolutionary in its character and tendency.

Whether the Constitution be a compact between States in their sovereign capacities, is a question which must be mainly argued from what is contained in the instrument itself. We all agree that it is an instrument which has been in some way clothed with power. We all admit that it speaks with authority. The first question then is, What does it say of itself? What does it purport to be? Does it style itself a league, confederacy, or compact between sovereign States? It is to be remembered, sir, that the Constitution began to speak only after its adoption. Until it was ratified by nine States, it was but a proposal, the mere draught of an instrument. It was like a deed drawn, but not executed. The Convention had framed it; sent it to Congress, then sitting under the Confederation; Congress had transmitted it to the State legislatures; and by these last it was laid before conventions of the people in the several States. All this while it was inoperative paper. It had received no stamp of authority, no sanction; it spoke no language. But when ratified by the people in their respective conventions, then it had a voice, and spoke authentically. Every word in it had then received the sanction of the popular will, and was to be received as the expression of that will. What the Constitution says of itself, therefore, is as conclusive as what it says on any other point. Does it call itself a "compact"? Certainly not. It uses the word *compact* but once, and that is when it declares that the States shall enter into no compact. Does it call itself a "league," a "confederacy," a "subsisting treaty between the States"? Certainly not. There is not a particle of such language in all its pages. But it declares itself a CONSTITUTION. What is a *constitution?* Certainly not a league, compact, or confederacy, but a *fundamental law.* That fundamental regulation which determines the manner in which the public authority is to be executed, is what forms the *constitution* of a state. Those primary rules which concern the body itself, and the very being of the political society, the form of government, and the manner in which power is to be exercised,—all, in a word, which form together the *constitution of a state,*—these are the fundamental laws. This, sir, is the language of the public writers. But do we need to be informed, in this country, what a *constitution* is? Is it not an idea perfectly familiar, definite, and well settled? We are at no loss to understand what is meant by the constitution of one of the States; and the Constitution of the United States speaks of itself as being an instrument of the same nature. It says, this *Constitution* shall be the law of the land, anything in any State *constitution* to the contrary notwithstanding. And it speaks of itself, too, in plain contradistinction from a confederation; for it says that all debts contracted, and all engagements entered into, by the United States, shall be as valid under this *Constitution* as under the *Confederation.* It does not say, as valid under this *compact,* or this league, or this confederation, as under the former confederation, but as valid under this *Constitution.*

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*The editors have omitted the Bunker Hill Monument oration of Webster, thinking that it may easily be found, if desired, in separate editions, and that the speech here selected may profitably be studied beside that of Calhoun.

[1] This speech was delivered on Feb. 16, 1833, in answer to Calhoun's speech of the same day. (See p. 520.) Since it is very long, the elaboration of the argument has been omitted whenever possible, the main points, however, being kept. After reviewing and briefly answering the resolutions and arguments brought forward by Calhoun, Webster proceeded as above.

This, then, sir, is declared to be a *constitution.* A constitution is the fundamental law of the state; and this is expressly declared to be the supreme law. It is as if the people had said "We prescribe this fundamental law," or "this supreme law," for they do say that they establish this Constitution, and that it shall be the supreme law. They say that they *ordain and establish* it. Now, sir, what is the common application of these words? We do not speak of *ordaining* leagues and compacts. If this was intended to be a compact or league, and the States to be parties to it, why was it not so said? Why is there found no one expression in the whole instrument indicating such intent? The old Confederation was expressly called a *league,* and into this league it was declared that the States, as States, severally entered. Why was not similar language used in the Constitution, if a similar intention had existed? Why was it not said, "the States enter into this new league," "the States form this new confederation," or "the States agree to this new compact"? Or why was it not said, in the language of the gentleman's resolution, that the people of the several States acceded to this compact in their sovereign capacities? What reason is there for supposing that the framers of the Constitution rejected expressions appropriate to their own meaning, and adopted others wholly at war with that meaning?

Again, sir, the Constitution speaks of that political system which is established as "the government of the United States." Is it not doing strange violence to language to call a league or a compact between sovereign powers a *government?* The government of a state is that organization in which the political power resides. It is the political being created by the constitution or fundamental law. The broad and clear difference between a government and a league or compact is, that a government is a body politic; it has a will of its own; and it possesses powers and faculties to execute its own purposes. Every compact looks to some power to enforce its stipulations. Even in a compact between sovereign communities, there always exists this ultimate reference to a power to insure its execution; although, in such case, this power is but the force of one party against the force of another; that is to say, the power of war. But a *government* executes its decisions by its own supreme authority. Its use of force in compelling obedience to its own enactments is not war. It contemplates no opposing party having a right of resistance. It rests on its own power to enforce its own will; and when it ceases to possess this power, it is no longer a government.

Mr. President, I concur so generally in the very able speech of the gentleman from Virginia near me,[2] that it is not without diffidence and regret that I venture to differ with him on any point. His opinions, sir, are redolent of the doctrines of a very distinguished school, for which I have the highest regard, of whose doctrines I can say, what I can also say of the gentleman's speech, that, while I concur in the results, I must be permitted to hesitate about some of the premises. I do not agree that the Constitution is a compact between States in their sovereign capacities. I do not agree that, in strictness of language, it is a compact at all. But I do agree that it is founded on consent or agreement, or on compact, if the gentleman prefers that word, and means no more by it than voluntary consent or agreement. The Constitution, sir, is not a contract, but the result of a contract; meaning by contract no more than assent. Founded on consent, it is a government proper. Adopted by the agreement of the people of the United States, when adopted, it has become a Constitution. The people have agreed to make a Constitution; but when made, that Constitution becomes what its name imports. It is no longer a mere agreement. Our laws, sir, have their foundation in the agreement or consent of the two houses of Congress. We say, habitually, that one house proposes a bill, and the other agrees to it; but the result of this agreement is not a compact but a law. The law, the statute, is not the agreement, but something created by the agreement; and something which, when created, has a new character, and acts by its own authority. So the Constitution of the United States, founded in or on the consent of the people, may be said to rest on compact or consent; but it is not itself the compact, but its result. When the people agree to erect a government, and actually erect it, the thing is done, and the agreement is at an end. The compact is executed, and the end designed by it attained. Henceforth, the fruit of the agreement exists, but the agreement itself is merged in its own accomplishment; since there can be no longer a subsisting agreement or compact *to form* a constitution or government, after that constitution or government has been actually formed and established.

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[2] Mr. Rives. [Webster's note].

It appears to me, Mr. President, that the plainest account of the establishment of this Government presents the most just and philosophical view of its foundation. The people of the several States had their separate State governments; and between the States there also existed a Confederation. With this condition of things the people were not satisfied, as the Confederation had been found not to fulfill its intended objects. It was *proposed,* therefore, to erect a new, common government, which should possess certain definite powers, such as regarded the prosperity of the people of all the States, and to be formed upon the general model of American constitutions. This proposal was assented to, and an instrument was presented to the people of the several States for their consideration. They approved it, and agreed to adopt it, as a Constitution. They executed that agreement; they adopted the Constitution as a Constitution, and henceforth it must stand as a Constitution until it shall be altogether destroyed. Now, sir, is not this the truth of the whole matter? And is not all that we have heard of compact between sovereign States the mere effect of a theoretical and artificial mode of reasoning upon the subject? a mode of reasoning which disregards plain facts for the sake of hypothesis?[3]

. . . .

Looking still further to the provisions of the Constitution itself, in order to learn its true character, we find its great apparent purpose to be, to unite the people of all the States under one general government, for certain definite objects, and, to the extent of this union, to restrain the separate authority of the States. Congress only can declare war; therefore, when one State is at war with a foreign nation, all must be at war. The President and the Senate only can make peace; when peace is made for one State, therefore, it must be made for all.

Can anything be conceived more preposterous, than that any State should have power to nullify the proceedings of the general government respecting peace and war? When war is declared by a law of Congress, can a single State nullify that law, and remain at peace? And yet she may nullify that law as well as any other. If the President and Senate make peace, may one State, nevertheless, continue the war? And yet, if she can nullify a law, she may quite as well nullify a treaty.

The truth is, Mr. President, and no ingenuity of argument, no subtilty of distinction can evade it, that, as to certain purposes, the people of the United States are one people. They are one in making war, and one in making peace; they are one in regulating commerce, and one in laying duties of imposts. The very end and purpose of the Constitution was, to make them one people in these particulars; and it has effectually accomplished its object. All this is apparent on the face of the Constitution itself. I have already said, sir, that to obtain a power of direct legislation over the people, especially in regard to imposts, was always prominent as a reason for getting rid of the Confederation, and forming a new Constitution. Among innumerable proofs of this, before the assembling of the Convention, allow me to refer only to the report of the committee of the old Congress, July, 1785.

But, sir, let us go to the actual formation of the Constitution; let us open the journal of the Convention itself, and we shall see that the very first resolution which the Convention adopted was, "THAT A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO BE ESTABLISHED, CONSISTING OF A SUPREME LEGISLATURE, JUDICIARY, AND EXECUTIVE."

This itself completely negatives all idea of league, and compact, and confederation. Terms could not be chosen more fit to express an intention to establish a national government, and to banish forever all notion of a compact between sovereign States.

This resolution was adopted on the 30th of May, 1787. Afterwards, the style was altered, and, instead of being called a national government, it was called the government of the United States; but the substance of this resolution was retained, and was at the head of that list of resolutions which was afterwards sent to the committee who were to frame the instrument.[4]

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Indeed, sir, if we look to all contemporary history, to the numbers of the *Federalist*, to the debates in the conventions, to the publications of friends and foes, they all agree, that a change had been made from a confederacy of States, to a different system; they all agree, that the Convention had formed a constitution for a national government. With this result some were satisfied, and some were dissatisfied; but all admitted that the thing had been done. In none of these various productions and publications did anyone intimate that the new Constitution was but another compact between States in their sovereign capacities. I do not find such an opinion advanced in a single instance. Everywhere, the people were told that the old Confederation was to be abandoned, and a new system to be tried; that a proper government was proposed, to be founded in the name of the people, and to have a regular organization of its own. Everywhere, the people were told that it was to be a government with direct powers to make laws over individuals, and to lay taxes and imposts without the consent of the States. Everywhere, it was understood to be a popular constitution. It came to the people for their adoption, and was to rest on the same deep foundation as the State constitutions themselves. Its most distinguished advocates, who had been themselves members of the Convention, declared that the very object of submitting the Constitution to the people was, to preclude the possibility of its being regarded as a mere compact. "However gross a heresy," say the writers[5] of the *Federalist*, "it may be to maintain that a party to a *compact* has a right to revoke that *compact*, the doctrine itself has had respectable advocates. The possibility of a question of this nature proves the necessity of laying the foundations of our national government deeper than in the mere sanction of delegated authority. The fabric of American empire ought to rest on the solid basis of THE CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE."[6]

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[3] The six short paragraphs omitted emphasize the idea that the sovereignty of the United States government is a sovereignty *of the people.*

[4] There follows the explanation that though the Constitutional Convention debated whether to continue the Confederacy, they finally decided to reject the idea of a compact and instead to form a strong national government. Webster quotes from the speeches made in the convention.

. . . .

Finally, sir, how can any man get over the words of the Constitution itself?—"WE, THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES, DO ORDAIN AND ESTABLISH THIS CONSTITUTION." These words must cease to be a part of the Constitution, they must be obliterated from the parchment on which they are written, before any human ingenuity or human argument can remove the popular basis on which that Constitution rests, and turn the instrument into a mere compact between sovereign States.

The second proposition, sir, which I propose to maintain, is, that no State authority can dissolve the relations subsisting between the Government of the United States and individuals; that nothing can dissolve these relations but revolution; and that, therefore, there can be no such thing as *secession* without revolution. All this follows, as it seems to me, as a just consequence, if it be first proved that the Constitution of the United States is a government proper, owing protection to individuals, and entitled to their obedience.

The people, sir, in every State, live under two governments. They owe obedience to both. These governments, though distinct, are not adverse. Each has its separate sphere, and its peculiar powers and duties. It is not a contest between two sovereigns for the same power, like the wars of the rival houses in England; nor is it a dispute, between a government *de facto*[7] and a government *de jure*. It is the case of a division of powers between two governments, made by the people, to whom both are responsible. Neither can dispense with the duty which individuals owe to the other; neither can call itself master of the other: the people are masters of both. This division of power, it is true, is in a great measure unknown in Europe. It is the peculiar system of America; and though new and singular, it is not incomprehensible. The State constitutions are established by the people of the States. This Constitution is established by the people of all the States. How, then, can a State secede? How can a State undo what the whole people have done? How can she absolve her citizens from their obedience to the laws of the United States? How can she annul their obligations and oaths? How can the members of her legislature renounce their own oaths? Sir, secession, as a revolutionary right, is intelligible; as a right to be proclaimed in the midst of civil commotions, and asserted at the head of armies, I can understand it. But as a practical right, existing under the Constitution, and in conformity with its provisions, it seems to me to be nothing but a plain absurdity; for it supposes resistance to government, under the authority of government itself; it supposes dismemberment, without violating the principles of union; it supposes opposition to law, without crime; it supposes the violation of oaths, without responsibility; it supposes the total overthrow of government, without revolution. . . . . .

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[5] See *The Federalist*, No. XXII. (by Alexander Hamilton).

[6] There follows proof that the states in ratifying the Constitution recognized that it was a government of the people.

[7] In reality, as opposed to *de jure*, by law.

The Constitution, sir, regards itself as perpetual and immortal. It seeks to establish a union among the people of the States, which shall last through all time. Or, if the common fate of things human must be expected at some period to happen to it, yet that catastrophe is not anticipated.

The instrument contains ample provisions for its amendment, at all times; none for its abandonment, at any time. It declares that new States may come into the Union, but it does not declare that old States may go out. The Union is not a temporary partnership of States. It is the association of the people, under a constitution of government, uniting their power, joining together their highest interests, cementing their present enjoyments, and blending, in one indivisible mass, all their hopes for the future. Whatsoever is steadfast in just political principles; whatsoever is permanent in the structure of human society; whatsoever there is which can derive an enduring character from being founded on deep-laid principles of constitutional liberty and on the broad foundations of the public will,—all these unite to entitle this instrument to be regarded as a permanent constitution of government.

In the next place, Mr. President, I contend that there is a supreme law of the land, consisting of the Constitution, acts of Congress passed in pursuance of it, and the public treaties. This will not be denied, because such are the very words of the Constitution. But I contend, further, that it rightfully belongs to Congress, and to the courts of the United States, to settle the construction of this supreme law, in doubtful cases. This is denied; and here arises the great practical question, *Who is to construe finally the Constitution of the United States?* We all agree that the Constitution is the supreme law; but who shall interpret that law? In our system of the division of powers between different governments, controversies will necessarily sometimes arise, respecting the extent of the powers of each. Who shall decide these controversies? Does it rest with the general government, in all or any of its departments, to exercise the office of final interpreter? Or may each of the States, as well as the general government, claim this right of ultimate decision? The practical result of this whole debate turns on this point. The gentleman contends that each State may judge for itself of any alleged violation of the Constitution, and may finally decide for itself, and may execute its own decisions by its own power. All the recent proceedings in South Carolina are founded on this claim of right. Her convention has pronounced the revenue laws of the United States unconstitutional; and this decision she does not allow any authority of the United States to overrule or reverse. Of course she rejects the authority of Congress, because the very object of the ordinance is to reverse the decision of Congress; and she rejects, too, the authority of the courts of the United States, because she expressly prohibits all appeal to those courts. It is in order to sustain this asserted right of being her own judge, that she pronounces the Constitution of the United States to be but a compact, to which she is a party, and a sovereign party. If this be established, then the inference is supposed to follow, that, being sovereign, there is no power to control her decision; and her own judgment on her own compact is, and must be, conclusive.[8]

. . . .

But, Mr. President, the Constitution has not left this cardinal point without full and explicit provisions. First, as to the authority of Congress. Having enumerated the specific powers conferred on Congress, the Constitution adds, as a distinct and substantive clause, the following, viz.: "To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof." If this means anything, it means that Congress may judge of the true extent and just interpretation of the specific powers granted to it, and may judge also of what is necessary and proper for executing those powers. If Congress is to judge of what is necessary for the execution of its powers, it must, of necessity, judge of the extent and interpretation of those powers.

And in regard, sir, to the judiciary, the Constitution is still more express and emphatic. It declares that the judicial power shall extend to all *cases* in law or equity arising under the Constitution, laws of the United States, and treaties; that there shall be *one* Supreme Court, and that this Supreme Court shall have appellate jurisdiction[9] of all these cases, subject to such exceptions as Congress may make. It is impossible to escape from the generality of these words. If a case arises under the Constitution, that is, if a case arises depending on the construc-

[8] The truism is then emphasized that the whole cannot govern the parts if one part can govern the whole.

[9] shall hear appeals

tion of the Constitution, the judicial power of the United States extends to it. It reaches *the case, the question;* it attaches the power of the national judicature to the *case* itself, in whatever court it may arise or exist; and in this *case* the Supreme Court has appellate jurisdiction over all courts whatever. No language could provide with more effect and precision than is here done, for subjecting constitutional questions to the ultimate decision of the Supreme Court. And, sir, this is exactly what the Convention found it necessary to provide for, and intended to provide for. It is, too, exactly what the people were universally told was done when they adopted the Constitution. One of the first resolutions adopted by the Convention was in these words, viz.: "That the jurisdiction of the national judiciary shall extend to cases which respect *the collection of the national revenue,* and questions which involve the national peace and harmony." Now, sir, this either had no sensible meaning at all, or else it meant that the jurisdiction of the national judiciary should extend to these questions, *with a paramount authority.* It is not to be supposed that the Convention intended that the power of the national judiciary should extend to these questions, and that the power of the judicatures of the States should also extend to them, with *equal power of final decision.* This would be to defeat the whole object of the provision. There were thirteen judicatures already in existence. The evil complained of, or the danger to be guarded against, was contradiction and repugnance in the decisions of these judicatures. If the framers of the Constitution meant to create a fourteenth, and yet not to give it power to revise and control the decisions of the existing thirteen, then they only intended to augment the existing evil and the apprehended danger by increasing still further the chances of discordant judgments. Why, sir, has it become a settled axiom in politics that every government must have a judicial power coextensive with its legislative power? Certainly, there is only this reason, namely, that the laws may receive a uniform interpretation and a uniform execution. This object cannot be otherwise attained. A statute is what it is judicially interpreted to be; and if it be construed one way in New Hampshire, and another way in Georgia, there is no uniform law. One supreme court, with appellate and final jurisdiction, is the natural and only adequate means, in any government, to secure this uniformity. The Convention saw all this clearly; and the resolution which I have quoted, never afterwards rescinded, passed through various modifications, till it finally received the form which the article now bears in the Constitution.[10]

. . . .

Gentlemen appear to me, sir, to look at but one side of the question. They regard only the supposed danger of trusting a government with the interpretation of its own powers. But will they view the question in its other aspect? Will they show us how it is possible for a government to get along with four-and-twenty interpreters of its laws and powers? Gentlemen argue, too, as if, in these cases, the State would be always right, and the general government always wrong. But suppose the reverse; suppose the State wrong (and, since they differ, some of them must be wrong); are the most important and essential operations of the government to be embarrassed and arrested, because one State holds the contrary opinion? Mr. President, every argument which refers the constitutionality of acts of Congress to State decision appeals from the majority to the minority; it appeals from the common interest to a particular interest; from the counsels of all to the counsel of one; and endeavors to supersede the judgment of the whole by the judgment of a part.[11]

. . . .

Sir, those who espouse the doctrines of nullification reject, as it seems to me, the first great principle of all republican liberty; that is, that the majority *must* govern. In matters of common concern, the judgment of a majority *must* stand as the judgment of the whole. This is a law imposed on us by the absolute necessity of the case; and if we do not act upon it, there is no possibility of maintaining any government but despotism. We hear loud and repeated denunciations against what is called *majority government.* It is declared, with much warmth, that a majority government cannot be maintained in the United States. What, then, do gentlemen wish? Do they wish to establish a *minority government?* Do they wish to subject the will of the many to the will of the few? The honorable gentleman from South Carolina has spoken of absolute majorities and majorities concurrent; language wholly unknown to our Constitution, and to which it is not easy to affix definite ideas. As far as I understand it, it would teach us that the absolute majority may be found in Congress, but the majority concurrent must be looked for in the States; that is to say, sir, stripping the matter of this novelty of phrase, that the dissent of one or more States, as States, renders void the decision of a majority of Congress, so far as that State is concerned. And so this doctrine, running but a short career, like other dogmas of the day, terminates in nullification.[12]

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[10] Webster then shows that different methods of strengthening the central government were suggested in the Federal Convention, some of which were not approved, but all of which aimed at the same end. Of what use would be a supreme judiciary if the judiciary of each state were supreme?

[11] Webster goes on to say that as the supreme judiciary must be the final judge, so Congress must be the supreme legislative body.

. . . .

Does not the gentleman perceive, sir, how his argument against majorities might here be retorted upon him? Does he not see how cogently he might be asked, whether it be the character of nullification to practice what it preaches? Look to South Carolina, at the present moment. How far are the rights of minorities there respected? I confess, sir, I have not known, in peaceable times, the power of the majority carried with a higher hand, or upheld with more relentless disregard of the rights, feelings, and principles of the minority;—a minority embracing, as the gentleman himself will admit, a large portion of the worth and respectability of the State;[13] a minority comprehending in its numbers men who have been associated with him, and with us, in these halls of legislation; men who have served their country at home and honored it abroad; men who would cheerfully lay down their lives for their native State, in any cause which they could regard as the cause of honor and duty; men above fear, and above reproach; whose deepest grief and distress spring from the conviction, that the present proceedings of the State must ultimately reflect discredit upon her. How is this minority, how are these men, regarded? They are enthralled and disfranchised by ordinances and acts of legislation; subjected to tests and oaths, incompatible, as they conscientiously think, with oaths already taken, and obligations already assumed, they are proscribed and denounced, as recreants to duty and patriotism, and slaves to a foreign power. Both the spirit which pursues them, and the positive measures which emanate from that spirit, are harsh and proscriptive beyond all precedent within my knowledge, except in periods of professed revolution.

It is not, sir, one would think, for those who would approve these proceedings to complain of the power of majorities.

Mr. President, all popular governments rest on two principles, or two assumptions:—

First, That there is so far a common interest among those over whom the government extends, as that it may provide for the defense, protection, and good government of the whole, without injustice or oppression to parts; and

Secondly, That the representatives of the people, and especially the people themselves, are secure against general corruption, and may be trusted, therefore, with the exercise of power.

Whoever argues against these principles argues against the practicability of all free governments. And whoever admits these, must admit, or cannot deny, that power is as safe in the hands of Congress as in those of other representative bodies. Congress is not irresponsible. Its members are agents of the people, elected by them, answerable to them, and liable to be displaced or superseded, at their pleasure; and they possess as fair a claim to the confidence of the people, while they continue to deserve it, as any other public political agents.

If, then, sir, the manifest intention of the Convention, and the contemporary admission of both friends and foes, prove anything; if the plain text of the instrument itself, as well as the necessary implication from other provisions, prove anything; if the early legislation of Congress, the course of judicial decisions, acquiesced in by all the States for forty years, prove anything,—then it is proved that there is a supreme law and a final interpreter.

My fourth and last proposition, Mr. President, was, that any attempt by a State to abrogate or nullify acts of Congress is a usurpation on the powers of the general government and on the equal rights of other States, a violation of the Constitution, and a proceeding essentially revolutionary. This is undoubtedly true, if the preceding propositions be regarded as proved. If the Government of the United States be trusted with the duty, in any department, of declaring the extent of its own powers, then a State ordinance, or act of legislation, authorizing resistance to an act of Congress, on the alleged ground of its unconstitutionality, is manifestly a usurpation upon its powers. If the

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[12] Here Webster emphasizes the fact that the government of the United States, by means of the President's veto power and the Senate, where states have equal representation without regard to size, furnishes checks upon mere majorities.

[13] The leader of this strong minority, which opposed nullification, was the statesman Joel Roberts Poinsett.

States have equal rights in matters concerning the whole, then for one State to set up her judgment against the judgment of the rest, and to insist on executing that judgment by force, is also a manifest usurpation on the rights of other States. If the Constitution of the United States be a government proper, with authority to pass laws, and to give them a uniform interpretation and execution, then the interposition of a State, to enforce her own construction, and to resist, as to herself, that law which binds the other States, is a violation of the Constitution.

If that be revolutionary which arrests the legislative, executive, and judicial power of government, dispenses with existing oaths and obligations of obedience, and elevates another power to supreme dominion, then nullification is revolutionary. Or if that be revolutionary the natural tendency and practical effect of which are to break the Union into fragments, to sever all connection among the people of the respective States, and to prostrate this general government in the dust, then nullification is revolutionary.

Nullification, sir, is as distinctly revolutionary as secession; but I cannot say that the revolution which it seeks is one of so respectable a character. Secession would, it is true, abandon the Constitution altogether; but then it would profess to abandon it. Whatever other inconsistencies it might run into, one, at least, it would avoid. It would not belong to a government, while it rejected its authority. It would not repel the burden, and continue to enjoy the benefits. It would not aid in passing laws which others are to obey, and yet reject their authority as to itself. It would not undertake to reconcile obedience to public authority with an asserted right of command over that same authority. It would not be in the Government, and above the Government, at the same time. But though secession may be a more respectable mode of attaining the object than nullification, it is not more truly revolutionary. Each, and both, resist the constitutional authorities; each, and both, would sever the Union, and subvert the government.[14]

. . . .

Mr. President, if the friends of nullification should be able to propagate their opinions, and to give them practical effect, they would, in my judgment, prove themselves the most skilful "architects of ruin," the most effectual extinguishers of high-raised expectation, the greatest blasters of human hopes, that any age has produced. They would stand up to proclaim, in tones which would pierce the ears of half the human race, that the last great experiment of representative government had failed. They would send forth sounds, at the hearing of which the doctrine of the divine right of kings would feel, even in its grave, a returning sense of vitality and resuscitation. Millions of eyes, of those who now feed their inherent love of liberty on the success of the American example, would turn away from beholding our dismemberment, and find no place on earth whereon to rest their gratified sight. Amidst the incantations and orgies of nullification, secession, disunion, and revolution, would be celebrated the funeral rites of constitutional and republican liberty.

But, sir, if the government do its duty, if it act with firmness and with moderation, these opinions cannot prevail. Be assured, sir, be assured that, among the political sentiments of this people, the love of union is still uppermost. They will stand fast by the Constitution, and by those who defend it. I rely on no temporary expedients, on no political combination; but I rely on the true American feeling, the genuine patriotism of the people, and the imperative decision of the public voice. Disorder and confusion, indeed, may arise; scenes of commotion and contest are threatened, and perhaps may come. With my whole heart I pray for the continuance of the domestic peace and quiet of the country. I desire, most ardently, the restoration of affection and harmony to all its parts. I desire that every citizen of the whole country may look to this Government with no other sentiments than those of grateful respect and attachment. But I cannot yield even to kind feelings the cause of the Constitution, the true glory of the country, and the great trust which we hold in our hands for succeeding ages. If the Constitution cannot be maintained without meeting these scenes of commotion and contest, however unwelcome, they must come. We cannot, we must not, we dare not, omit to do that which, in our judgment, the safety of the Union requires. Not regardless of consequences, we must yet meet consequences; seeing the hazards which surround the discharge of public duty, it must yet be discharged. For myself, sir, I shun no responsibility justly devolving on me, here or elsewhere, in attempting to maintain the cause. I am bound to it by indissoluble ties of affection and duty, and I shall cheerfully partake in its fortunes and its fate. I am ready to perform my own appropriate part, whenever and wherever the occasion may call on me, and to take my chance among those upon whom blows may fall first and fall thickest. I shall exert every faculty I possess in aiding to prevent the Constitution from being nullified, destroyed, or impaired; and even should I see it fall, I will still, with a voice feeble perhaps, but earnest as ever issued from human lips, and with fidelity and zeal which nothing shall extinguish, call on the PEOPLE to come to its rescue.

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[14] There follows a minute exposition of the ordinance and resolutions (see note, p. 520) of South Carolina and of their necessary result, and the proof that in the first Congress representatives from South Carolina were among the foremost to suggest the laying of impost duties.

1833 1833

RUFUS CHOATE

Born, Ipswich, Massachusetts, 1799, died Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1859. He graduated from Dartmouth College in 1819, studied and practiced law, entered Congress in 1830, was United States senator, 1841 to 1845, filling out the term of Daniel Webster, then secretary of state. His contemporary reputation was as leader of the Massachusetts bar. His *Works* were published in 1862.

From A DISCOURSE COMMEMORATIVE OF DANIEL WEBSTER

DELIVERED BEFORE THE FACULTY, STUDENTS, AND ALUMNI OF DARTMOUTH COLLEGE,[1]
JULY 27, 1853

It would be a strange neglect of a beautiful and approved custom of the schools of learning, and of one of the most pious and appropriate of the offices of literature, if the college in which the intellectual life of Daniel Webster began, and to which his name imparts charm and illustration, should give no formal expression to her grief in the common sorrow; if she should not draw near, of the most sad, in the procession of the bereaved, to the tomb at the sea, nor find, in all her classic shades, one affectionate and grateful leaf to set in the garland with which they have bound the brow of her child, the mightiest departed. Others mourn and praise him by his more distant and more general titles to fame and remembrance; his supremacy of intellect, his statesmanship of so many years, his eloquence of reason and of the heart, his love of country, incorruptible, conscientious, and ruling every hour and act; that greatness combined of genius, of character, of manner, of place, of achievement, which was just now among us, and is not, and yet lives still and evermore. You come, his cherishing mother, to own a closer tie, to indulge an emotion more personal and more fond,—grief and exultation contending for mastery, as in the bosom of the desolated parent, whose tears could not hinder him from exclaiming, "I would not exchange my dead son for any living one of Christendom."

Many places in our American world have spoken his eulogy. To all places the service was befitting, for "his renown, is it not of the treasures of the whole country?" To some it belonged, with a strong local propriety, to discharge it. In the halls of Congress, where the majestic form seems ever to stand, and the deep tones to linger, the decorated scene of his larger labors and most diffusive glory; in the courts of law, to whose gladsome light he loved to return,—putting on again the robes of that profession ancient as magistracy, noble as virtue, necessary as justice,—in which he found the beginning of his honors; in Faneuil Hall, whose air breathes and burns of him; in the commercial cities, to whose pursuits his diplomacy secured a peaceful sea;[2] in the cities of the inland, around which his capacious public affections, and wise discernment, aimed ever to develop the uncounted resources of that other, and that larger, and that newer America; in the pulpit, whose place among the higher influences which exalt a state, our guide in life, our consolation in death, he appreciated profoundly, and vindicated by weightiest argument and testimony, of whose offices it is among the fittest to mark and point the moral of the great things of the world, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power passing away as the pride of the wave,—passing from our eye to take on immortality. —in these places, and such as these, there seemed a reason beyond, and other, than the universal calamity, for such honors of the grave. But if so, how fit a place is this for such a service! We are among the scenes where the youth of Webster awoke first and fully to the life of the mind. We stand, as it were, at the sources—physical, social, moral, intellectual—of that exceeding greatness. Some now here saw that youth; almost it was yours, *Nilum parvum videre.*[3] Some, one of his instructors certainly, some possibly of his classmates, or nearest college friends, some of the books he read, some of the apartments in which he studied, are here.

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[1] From which Webster graduated in 1801.

[2] Webster allayed serious international irritation by negotiating in 1842 the Ashburton treaty, which settled the boundary between the northeastern states and the British provinces, and finally disposed of the matter of search upon the high seas.

[3] Literally, "To see nothing small"; hence to see a prodigy.

We can almost call up from their habitation in the past, or in the fancy, the whole spiritual circle which environed that time of his life; the opinions he had embraced; the theories of mind, of religion, of morals, of philosophy, to which he had surrendered himself; the canons of taste and criticism which he had accepted; the great authors whom he loved best; the trophies which began to disturb his sleep; the facts of history which he had learned, believed, and begun to interpret; the shapes of hope and fear in which imagination began to bring before him the good and evil of the future. Still the same outward world is around you, and above you. The sweet and solemn flow of the river, gleaming through intervals here and there; margins and samples of the same old woods, but thinned and retiring; the same range of green hills yonder, tolerant of culture to the top, but shaded then by primeval forests, on whose crest the last rays of sunset lingered; the summit of Ascutney; the great northern light that never sets; the constellations that walk around, and watch the pole; the same nature, undecayed, unchanging, is here. Almost the idolatries of the old paganism grow intelligible. *"Magnorum fluminum capita veneramur,"* exclaims Seneca. *"Subita et ex abrupto vasti amnis eruptio aras habet!"*[4] We stand at the fountain of a stream; we stand, rather, at the place where a stream, sudden, and from hidden springs, bursts to light; and whence we can follow it along and down, as we might our own Connecticut, and trace its resplendent pathway to the sea; and we venerate, and would almost build altars here. If I may adopt the lofty language of one of the admirers of William Pitt,[5] we come naturally to this place, as if we could thus recall every circumstance of splendid preparation which contributed to fit the great man for the scene of his glory. We come, as if better here than elsewhere "we could watch, fold by fold, the bracing on of his Vulcanian panoply,[6] and observe with pleased anxiety the leading forth of that chariot which, borne on irresistible wheels, and drawn by steeds of immortal race, is to crush the necks of the mighty, and sweep away the serried strength of armies."

And, therefore, it were fitter that I should ask of you, than speak to you, concerning him. Little, indeed, anywhere can be added now to that wealth of eulogy that has been heaped upon his tomb. Before he died, even, renowned in two hemispheres, in ours he seemed to be known with a universal nearness of knowledge. He walked so long and so conspicuously before the general eye; his actions, his opinions, on all things which had been large enough to agitate the public mind for the last thirty years and more, had had importance and consequences so remarkable,—anxiously waited for, passionately canvassed, not adopted always into the particular measure, or deciding the particular vote of government or the country, yet sinking deep into the reason of the people,—a stream of influence whose fruits it is yet too soon for political philosophy to appreciate completely; an impression of his extraordinary intellectual endowments, and of their peculiar superiority in that most imposing and intelligible of all forms of manifestation, the moving of others' minds by speech,—this impression had grown so universal and fixed, and it had kindled curiosity to hear him and read him so wide and so largely indulged; his individuality altogether was so absolute and so pronounced, the force of will no less than the power of genius; the exact type and fashion of his mind, not less than its general magnitude, were so distinctly shown through his musical and transparent style; the exterior of the man, the grand mystery of brow and eye, the deep tones, the solemnity, the sovereignty, as of those who would build states, where every power and every grace did seem to set its seal, had been made, by personal observation, by description, by the exaggeration, even, of those who had felt the spell, by art, the daguerreotype and picture and statue, so familiar to the American eye, graven on the memory like the Washington of Stuart;[7] the narrative of the mere incidents of his life had been so often told,—by some so authentically and with such skill,—and had been so literally committed to heart, that when he died there seemed to be little left but to say when and how his change came; with what dignity, with what possession of himself, with what loving thought for others, with what gratitude to God, uttered with unfaltering voice, that it was appointed to him there to die; to say how thus, leaning on the rod and staff of the promise, he took his way into the great darkness undismayed, till death should be swallowed up of life; and then to relate how they laid him in that simple grave, and turning and pausing, and joining their voices to the voices of the sea, bade him hail and farewell.

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[4] "We venerate the source of great rivers and put altars at the place where a vast river suddenly and unexpectedly bursts forth."

[5] The great English prime minister and statesman (1708-1778).

[6] An armor as strong as that wrought by Vulcan, the blacksmith god.

[7] The portrait of Washington by the noted American painter Gilbert Stuart belongs to the Boston Athenæum Library.

And yet, I hardly know what there is in public biography, what there is in literature, to be compared, in its kind, with the variety and beauty and adequacy of the series of discourses through which the love and grief, and deliberate and reasoning admiration of America for this great man, have been uttered. Little, indeed, there would be for me to say, if I were capable of the light ambition of proposing to omit all which others have said on this theme before,—little to add, if I sought to say anything wholly new.

I have thought,—perhaps the place where I was to speak suggested the topic,—that before we approach the ultimate and historical greatness of Mr. Webster in its two chief departments, and attempt to appreciate by what qualities of genius and character and what succession of action he attained it, there might be an interest in going back of all this, so to say, and pausing a few moments upon his youth. I include in that designation the period from his birth, on the eighteenth day of January, 1782, until 1805, when, twenty-three years of age, he declined the clerkship of his father's court, and dedicated himself irrevocably to the profession of the law and the chances of a summons to less or more of public life. These twenty-three years we shall call the youth of Webster. Its incidents are few and well known, and need not long detain us.

Until May, 1796, beyond the close of his fourteenth year, he lived at home, attending the schools of Masters Chase and Tappan, successively; at work sometimes, and sometimes at play like any boy; but finding already, as few beside him did, the stimulations and the food of intellectual life in the social library;[8] drinking in, unawares, from the moral and physical aspects about him, the lesson and the power of contention and self-trust; and learning how much grander than the forest bending to the long storm; or the silver and cherishing Merrimack swollen to inundation, and turning, as love become madness, to ravage the subject intervale; or old woods sullenly retiring before axe and fire, —learning to feel how much grander than these was the coming in of civilization as there he saw it, courage, labor, patience, plain living, heroical acting, high thinking, beautiful feeling, the fear of God, love of country and neighborhood and family, and all that form of human life of which his father and mother and sisters and brother were the endeared exemplification. In the arms of that circle, on parent knees, or later, in intervals of work or play, the future American statesman acquired the idea of country, and became conscious of a national tie and a national life. There and then, something, glimpses, a little of the romance, the sweet and bitter memories of a soldier and borderer of the old colonial time and war, opened to the large dark eyes of the child; memories of French and Indians stealing up to the very place where the story was telling; of men shot down at the plow, within sight of the old log house; of the massacre at Fort William Henry; of Stark, of Howe, of Wolfe falling in the arms of victory; and then of the next age, its grander scenes and higher names,—of the father's part at Bennington and White Plains;[9] of Lafayette and Washington; and then of the Constitution, just adopted, and the first President, just inaugurated, with services of public thanksgiving to Almighty God, and the Union just sprung into life, all radiant as morning, harbinger and promise of a brighter day. You have heard how in that season he bought and first read the Constitution on the cotton handkerchief. A small cannon, I think his biographers say, was the ominous plaything of Napoleon's childhood. But this incident reminds us rather of the youthful Luther, astonished and kindling over the first Latin Bible he ever saw,—or the still younger Pascal,[10] permitted to look into the Euclid,[11] to whose sublimities an irresistible nature had secretly attracted him. Long before his fourteenth year, the mother first, and then the father, and the teachers and the schools and the little neighborhood, had discovered an extraordinary hope in the boy; a purpose, a dream, not yet confessed, of giving him an education began to be cherished; and in May, 1796, at the age of a little more than fourteen, he was sent to Exeter. I have myself heard a gentleman, long a leader of the Essex bar, and eminent in public life, now no more, who was then a pupil at the school, describe his large frame, superb face, immature manners, and rustic dress, surmounted with a student's gown, when first he came; and say, too, how soon and universally his capacity was owned. Who does not wish that the glorious Buckminster[12] could have foreseen and witnessed the whole greatness, but certainly the renown of eloquence, which was to come to the young stranger, whom, choking, speechless, the great fountain of feelings sealed as yet, he tried in vain to encourage to declaim before the unconscious, bright tribes of the school? The influences of Exeter on him were excellent, but his stay was brief. In the winter of 1796 he was at home again; and in February, 1797, he was placed under the private tuition, and in the family, of Rev. Mr. Wood, of Boscawen. It was on the way with his father to the house of Mr. Wood that he first heard, with astonishment, that the parental love and good sense had resolved on the sacrifice of giving him an education at college. "I remember," he writes, "the very hill we were ascending, through deep snows, in a New England sleigh, when my father made his purpose known to me. I could not speak. How could he, I thought, with so large a family, and in such narrow circumstances, think of incurring so great an expense for me? A warm glow ran all over me, and I laid my head on my father's shoulder and wept." That speechlessness, that glow, those tears, reveal to us what his memory and consciousness could hardly do to him, that already, somewhere, at some hour of day or evening or night, as he read some page, or heard some narrative, or saw some happier schoolfellow set off from Exeter to begin his college life, the love of intellectual enjoyment, the ambition of intellectual supremacy, had taken hold of him; that, when or how he knew not, but before he was aware of it, the hope of obtaining a liberal education and leading a professional life had come to be his last thought before he slept, his first when he awoke, and to shape his dreams. Behold in them, too, his whole future. That day, that hour, that very moment, from the deep snows of that slow hill he set out on the long ascent that bore him—"no step backward"—to the high places of the world!

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[8] He learned from the library of living men—the people about him.

[9] Fort Wm. Henry at the head of Lake George fell into the hands of the French and Indians, August, 1757. Stark, the New Hampshire general, served valiantly in the French and Indian, and Revolutionary wars. George Howe, a British colonel, was killed at Ticonderoga. Wolfe died at Quebec at the moment of his victory over the French. The victory at Bennington, Vt., in 1777 was won by Stark and that at White Plains, N. Y., by General William Howe, in 1776.

[10] A French geometrician, 1623-1662. He studied geometry by himself when twelve and wrote a paper on conic sections at sixteen.

[11] The geometry of Euclid, a Greek mathematician of about 300 B. C.

. . . .

And so he has put on the robe of manhood, and has come to do the work of life. Of his youth there is no need to say more. It had been pure, happy, strenuous; in many things privileged. The influence of home, of his father, and the excellent mother, and that noble brother, whom he loved so dearly, and mourned with such sorrow,—these influences on his heart, principles, will, aims, were elevated and strong. At an early age, comparatively, the then great distinction of liberal education was his. His college life was brilliant and without a stain; and in moving his admission to the bar, Mr. Gore presented him as one of extraordinary promise.

> With prospects bright, upon the world he
>   came,—
> Pure love of virtue, strong desire of fame;
> Men watched the way his lofty mind
>   would take,
> And all foretold the progress he would
>   make.

And yet, if on some day, as that season was drawing to its close, it had been foretold to him, that before his life, prolonged to little more than threescore years and ten, should end, he should see that country, in which he was coming to act his part, expanded across a continent; the thirteen States of 1801 multiplied to thirty-one; the territory of the Northwest and the great valley below sown full of those stars of empire; the Mississippi forded, and the Sabine and Rio Grande, and the Nueces; the ponderous gates of the Rocky Mountains opened to shut no more; the great tranquil sea become our sea; her area seven times larger, her people five times more in number; that through all experiences of trial, the madness of party, the injustice of foreign powers, the vast enlargement of her borders, the antagonisms of interior interest and feeling,—the spirit of nationality would grow stronger still and more plastic; that the tide of American feeling would run ever fuller; that her agriculture would grow more scientific; her arts more various and instructed, and better rewarded; her commerce winged to a wider and still wider flight; that the part she would play in human affairs would grow nobler ever, and more recognized; that in this vast growth of national greatness time would be found for the higher necessities of the soul; that her popular and her higher education would go on advancing; that her charities and all her enterprises of philanthrophy would go on enlarging; that her age of lettered glory should find its auspicious dawn,—and then it had been also foretold him that even so, with her growth and strength, should his fame grow and be established and cherished, there where she should garner up her heart; that by long gradations of service and labor he should rise to be, before he should taste of death, of the peerless among her great ones; that he should win the double honor, and wear the double wreath of professional and public supremacy; that he should become her wisest to counsel and her most eloquent to persuade; that he should come to be called the Defender of the Constitution[13] and the preserver of honorable peace; that the "austere glory of suffering" to save the Union should be his; that his death, at the summit of greatness, on the verge of a ripe and venerable age, should be distinguished, less by the flags at half-mast on ocean and lake, less by the minute-gun, less by the public procession and the appointed eulogy, than by sudden paleness overspreading all faces, by gushing tears, by sorrow, thoughtful, boding, silent, the sense of desolateness, as if renown and grace were dead,—as if the hunter's path, and the sailor's, in the great solitude of wilderness or sea, henceforward were more lonely and less safe than before,—had this prediction been whispered, how calmly had that perfect sobriety of mind put it all aside as a pernicious or idle dream! Yet, in the fulfilment of that prediction is told the remaining story of his life.

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[12] He was a skilful and most beloved teacher, acting as under-instructor at the academy at Exeter and examined Webster for entrance by asking him to read *Luke* xxii. So well did Webster read it that no further examination was deemed necessary. "I could not speak before the school," said Webster. . . . Many a piece did I commit to memory and rehearse in my room over and over again, but when the day came, and the schoolmaster called my name, and I saw all eyes turned upon my seat, I could not raise myself from it. . . . Mr. Buckminster always pressed and entreated, most winningly, that I would venture, but I could never command sufficient resolution. When the occasion was over I went home and wept bitter tears of *mortification*."

. . . .

And now, is he who accuses Mr. Webster of "sinning against his own conscience,"[14] quite sure that he *knows,* that that conscience,—well instructed by profoundest political studies, and thoughts of the reason; well instructed by an appropriate moral institution[15] sedulously applied, did not commend and approve his conduct to himself? Does he know, that he had not anxiously and maturely studied the ethics of the Constitution, and *as a question of ethics,* but of ethics applied to a stupendous problem of practical life, and had not become satisfied that they were right? Does he know that he had not done this, when his faculties were all at their best; and his motives under no suspicion? May not such an inquirer, for aught you can know, may not that great mind have verily and conscientiously thought that he had learned in that investigation many things? May he not have thought that he learned, that the duty of the inhabitants of the free States, in that day's extremity, to the republic, the duty at all events of statesmen to the republic, is a little too large, and delicate, and difficult, to be all comprehended in the single emotion of compassion for one class of persons in the commonwealth, or in carrying out the single principle of abstract, and natural, and violent justice to one class? May he not have thought that he found there some stupendous exemplifications of what we read of, in books of casuistry, the "dialectics of conscience," as conflicts of duties; such things as the conflicts of the greater with the less; conflicts of the attainable with the visionary; conflicts of the real with the seeming; and may he not have been soothed to learn that the evil which he found in this part of the Constitution was the least of two; was unavoidable; was compensated; was justified; was commanded, as by a voice from the Mount, by a more exceeding and enduring good? May he not have thought that he had learned, that the grandest, most difficult, most pleasing to God, of the achievements of secular wisdom and philanthropy, is the building of a state; that of the first class of grandeur and difficulty, and acceptableness to Him, in this kind, was the building of our own; that unless everybody of consequence enough to be heard of in the age and generation of Washington,—unless that whole age and generation were in a conspiracy to cheat themselves, and history, and posterity, a certain policy of concession and forbearance of region to region, was indispensable to rear that master work of man; and that that same policy of concession and forbearance is as indispensable, more so, now, to afford a rational ground of hope, for its preservation? May he not have thought that he had learned that the obligation, if such in any sense you may call it, of one

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[13] The underlying motive in all of Webster's statesmanship was the preservation of the Union.

[14] Webster's Seventh of March speech, 1850, aroused much bitter feeling in both North and South. The opinion of men of the North like Sumner, Theodore Parker, Horace Mann, and Henry Wilson was somewhat like that expressed by Whittier in *Ichabod* (see p. 563). To them Webster seemed to be compromising his conscience in conceding too much to the South. To the South, on the other hand, Webster appeared to be favoring the North. However, the compromise measures were passed and his immediate object, the allaying of slavery agitation, was temporarily gained.

[15] instruction, teaching.

State to allow itself to become an asylum for those flying from slavery into another State,[16] was an obligation of benevolence, of humanity only, not of justice; that it must, therefore, on ethical principles, be exercised under all the limitations which regulate and condition the benevolence of States; that therefore each is to exercise it in strict subordination to its own interests, estimated by a wise statesmanship, and a well-instructed public conscience; that benevolence itself, even its ministrations of mere good-will, is an affair of measure and of proportions; and must choose sometimes between the greater good and the less; that if, to the highest degree, and widest diffusion of human happiness, a Union of States such as ours, some free, some not so, was necessary; and to such Union the Constitution was necessary; and to such a Constitution this clause was necessary, humanity itself prescribes it, and presides in it? May he not have thought that he learned that there are proposed to humanity in this world many fields of beneficent exertion; some larger, some smaller, some more, some less expensive and profitable to till; that among these it is always lawful, and often indispensable to make a choice; that sometimes, to acquire the right or the ability to labor in one, it is needful to covenant not to invade another; and that such covenant, in partial restraint, rather in reasonable direction of philanthrophy, is good in the forum of conscience; and setting out with these very elementary maxims of practical morals, may he not have thought that he learned from the careful study of the facts of our history and opinions, that to acquire the power of advancing the dearest interests of man, through generations countless, by that unequaled security of peace and progress, the Union; the power of advancing the interest of each State, each region, each relation—the slave and the master; the power of subjecting a whole continent all astir, and on fire with the emulation of young republics; of subjecting it, through ages of household calm, to the sweet influences of Christianity, of culture, of the great, gentle, and sure reformer, time; that to enable us to do this, to enable us to grasp this boundless and ever-renewing harvest of philanthropy, it would have been a good bargain—that humanity herself would have approved it—to have bound ourselves never so much as to look across the line into the enclosure of Southern municipal[17] slavery; certainly never to enter it; still less, still less, to

> Pluck its berries harsh and crude,
> And with forced fingers rude
> Shatter its leaves before the mellowing year.[18]

Until the accuser who charges him, now that he is in his grave, with "having sinned against his conscience," will assert that the conscience of a public man may not, must not, be instructed by profound knowledge of the vast subject-matter with which public life is conversant—even as the conscience of the mariner may be and must be instructed by the knowledge of navigation; and that of the pilot by the knowledge of the depths and shallows of the coast; and that of the engineer of the boat and the train, by the knowledge of the capacities of his mechanism to achieve a proposed velocity; and will assert that he is certain that the consummate science of our great statesman *was felt by himself to prescribe to his morality* another conduct than that which he adopted and that he thus consciously outraged that "sense of duty which pursues us ever,"—is he not inexcusable, whoever he is, that so judges another?

But it is time that this eulogy was spoken. My heart goes back into the coffin there with him, and I would pause. I went—it is a day or two since—alone, to see again the home which he so dearly loved, the chamber where he died, the grave in which they laid him—all habited as when

> His look drew audience still as night
> Or summer's noontide air,[19]

till the heavens be no more. Throughout that spacious and calm scene all things to the eye showed at first unchanged. The books in the library, the portraits, the table at which he wrote, the scientific culture of the land, the course of agricultural occupation, the coming-in of harvests, fruit of the seed his own hand had scattered, the animals and implements of husbandry, the trees planted by him in lines, in copses, in orchards, by thousands, the seat under the noble elm on which he used to sit to feel the southwest wind at evening, or hear the breathings of the sea, or the not less audible music of the starry heavens, all seemed at first unchanged. The sun of a bright day from which, however, something of the fervors of midsummer were wanting, fell temperately on them all, filled the air on all sides with the utterances of life, and gleamed on the long line of ocean. Some of those whom on earth he loved best, still were there. The great mind still seemed to preside; the great presence to be with you; you might expect to hear again the rich and playful tones of the voice of the old hospitality. Yet a moment more, and all the scene took on the aspect of one great monument, inscribed with his name, and sacred to his memory. And such it shall be in all the future of America! The sensation of desolateness, and loneliness, and darkness, with which you see it now, will pass away; the sharp grief of love and friendship will become soothed; men will repair thither as they are wont to commemorate the great days of history; the same glance shall take in, and the same emotions shall greet and bless, the Harbor of the Pilgrims and the Tomb of Webster.[20]

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[16] The Fugitive Slave Law, upheld by Webster and passed in 1850, aroused much bitter feeling in the North. It provided that runaway slaves must be returned to their masters, even from free states.

[17] One meaning of the word is "belonging to a state, kingdom, or nation."

[18] Milton, *Lycidas*, 3-5 (inexactly quoted).

[19] Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ii. 307 (inexactly quoted).

1853 1853

EDWARD EVERETT

Born, Dorchester, Massachusetts, 1794, died, Boston, 1865. Graduating from Harvard in 1811, Everett was minister at the Brattle Street (Boston) Unitarian Church in 1813, student in Germany, 1815 to 1819, professor of Greek literature, Harvard, 1819 to 1825, editor of the *North American Review*, 1820 to 1824. He was then successively member of Congress, governor of Massachusetts, minister to England, and president of Harvard College (1845-1849). In 1852-1854 he was for short terms secretary of state and United States senator from Massachusetts. His literary works include *Orations and Speeches*, 1836, 1850, 1859, and *The Life of Washington*, 1860. He had a large reputation as a platform orator.

From AN ADDRESS ON THE CHARACTER OF WASHINGTON [1]

. . . .

Washington's first appearance before the country at large,—then hardly to be called a country,—his first of three visits to Boston,—then a town of perhaps eighteen thousand inhabitants,—took place just a century ago last February, when he came among us, already the youthful hero of the Seven Years' War.[2] That war was not formally declared in Europe till the following May, but hostilities had already been carried on for two years, on the frontier of the Anglo-American Colonies, upon this continent. Washington was identified with the struggle from its commencement. If, in tracing back great consummations of affairs to their origin, we should endeavor to fix the very earliest date to the Revolution, the first distinct movement of a military nature in that series of events which resulted in the establishment of American Independence, I should be inclined to place it in the adventurous journey of Major Washington, then a youth of twenty, to the French post at Venango, in what is now the western part of Pennsylvania. When hostilities broke out, two years later, the post of active and efficient duty and of danger devolved upon him. He alone of all in conspicuous stations,—hero of misfortune,—escaped with life and honor from the disastrous field of Braddock's defeat, with all the reputation for conduct and courage which others bring home from successful wars. In the morning of his days the great cares of life were laid upon him. His pure spirit was early tried in the fires of disaster, and came out like thrice-refined gold from the furnace. Our Governor Shirley[3] had lately been appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the Royal forces in British America; and in the month of February, 1756, Colonel Washington, with one or two brother officers, came to Boston to obtain Shirley's decision on a question of precedence between the Provincial officers and those in the pay of the crown, and also to receive instructions as to the general plan of the campaign.

Washington, at the time, was twenty-four years of age, a model of manly strength and beauty, perfect in all the qualities and accomplishments of the gentlemen and the soldier, but wise and thoughtful beyond his years, inspiring at the outset of his career that love and confidence which are usually earned only by a life of service. Young as he was, his fame had preceded him. The events of the late campaign had drawn public attention toward him more distinctly than to any person in the country; and he had been the subject of that celebrated prophetic allusion from the pulpit in which he was spoken of by President Davies[4] as "that heroic youth, Colonel Washington, whom I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a manner for some important service to the country." He passed about ten days at Boston on this his first visit, in 1756, the object of public and private courtesy; but no particular record, I believe, remains of the manner in which his time was employed. In addition to the public objects of his errand he had an office of private sympathy to perform. The son of Governor Shirley had fallen the year before in Braddock's field; and Washington probably brought the first detailed information of that event to the sorrowing father. The season for taking the field had not yet arrived, and the youthful hero, whose heart was alive to the tenderest and most sacred sensibilities of our nature, lingered awhile in New York. Tradition has lifted a corner of the veil that hides the cause of his detention, but the bright vision of domestic felicity which it discloses failed to be realized.[5] After a few days passed in New York, he returned to his post on the frontier of Maryland and Virginia, where he remained in active service till the operations of the war were transferred to the Northwest.[6]

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[20] The orotund quality and the highly involved sentence structure of Choate's speech, are vanishing characteristics in the oratory of today.

[1] Everett delivered this address first on Feb. 22, 1856, before the Mercantile Library Association of Boston. He later repeated it, in southern and northern cities, eighty-three times for the benefit of the fund being raised by private subscription for the purchase of Mt. Vernon, and thus added to that fund over thirty-seven thousand dollars. What is omitted of the first part of the address is largely an explanation of the immediate cause for its delivery.

[2] The Seven Years' War proper was that between Austria, France, and Russia on the one side, and Frederick of Prussia on the other. The term is frequently used, however, for the struggle between the French and English going on at the same time on this continent. Washington served bravely in General Braddock's attack upon the French Fort Duquesne, on the present site of Pittsburgh. Bancroft writes: "Nothing but the superintending care of Providence could have saved him. An Indian chief —I suppose a Shawnee—singled him out with his rifle, and bade others of his warriors do the same. Two horses were killed under him; four balls penetrated his coat. 'Some potent Manitou guards his life,' exclaimed the savage. 'Death,' wrote Washington, 'was leveling my companions on every side of me; but by the all-powerful dispensations of Providence I have been protected.'" *History of the United States*, vol. IV. ch. 8.

[3] Colonial governor of Massachusetts, 1741-56.

Such was his first visit to Boston, such his first appearance before the country at large. His second was twenty years later. A mighty change in affairs had taken place. The Seven Years' War had been brought to a triumphant close for England; Quebec had fallen,[7] and the American possessions of France in the Northwest had been transferred to Great Britain. That important event changed the destinies of the continent. It relieved the English colonies of the ever-impending danger of a French and Indian war, and opened wide the road to their independent national existence. The ministry at London, in the unforeseen result of their policy, with their own hands dug the grave of British supremacy on this continent upon the heights of Abraham, and buried it, never to rise again, beneath the monument of Wolfe and Montcalm. The ill-starred plan of new taxation, matured at London while the old colonial ties were strained to bursting, brought on the crisis; and in twelve years from the signature of the treaty of 1763, blood was shed on Lexington Green.

Washington had passed the interval in retirement at Mount Vernon, for the most of the time a member of the Virginia Assembly, thoughtfully, not passionately, watching the progress of events; till in July, 1775, the young chieftain, who twenty years before seemed preserved by a special Providence in the desperate encounters of the western wilderness, takes the field at Cambridge, beneath the noble elm-tree still standing on the Common, as Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of United America. Having in that capacity brought the first great act of the Revolutionary drama to a triumphant close, by the expulsion of the Royal army from Boston, he entered it himself for the second time on the 18th of March, 1776, crossing in a boat from Lechmere's Point, now East Cambridge. He was still at the meridian of life, but the solemn destinies to which he was called had set the sacred impress of sadness on his brow. His natural temperament was joyous; it is even said that in a sally of youthful spirits he had declared that the whizzing of the bullets at Braddock's defeat was a music to his ear; but from the time he took command of the ill-appointed, suffering, sometimes dispirited armies of the Revolution, there is a tradition that the Father of his Country was seldom seen to smile.

This was the second visit of Washington to this part of the country, his second appearance in a high national capacity before the people of the Union. Years pass by; the august plan of Providence ripens; the beloved and revered chieftain, aided by his patriotic associates, carries the bleeding country through another seven years' war,—hard apprenticeship of Freedom; the great European antagonist and rival of England, revenging the loss of her American Colonies, and moved by the persuasive ardor of Lafayette, throws her sword into the scale,—thirteen independent State governments succeed to as many Colonies,—peace crowns the work,—the wounds of the Revolution are slowly healed,—America takes her place in the family of nations,—and a Constitution of Confederate Union, the bright consummate flower of our political growth, is formed.

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[4] President of Princeton, 1759-1761.

[5] Washington had apparently been courting, but unsuccessfully, Miss Phillipse, of New York.

[6] In 1758 he led the advance guard in a successful attack upon Fort Duquesne, which was then renamed Fort Pitt. At that time western Pennsylvania was known as the Northwest.

[7] Wolfe, the English general, took it from the French general Montcalm in September, 1759. This victory virtually closed the French and Indian (or Seven Years') War.

Heaven forbid that I should ascribe all the glory of this auspicious result to one man, even though that man were Washington: Heaven forbid that I should appear insensible to the merit of those by whom he was seconded and sustained, both in the revolutionary and constitutional age,—of Franklin and Adams, of Henry and Jefferson, of Lafayette, of Green, of Knox and Lincoln, of Jay and Hamilton and Madison,—men to whom the great chief himself never failed to do justice; but I say no more than each and all of these revered patriots would themselves have said, no more than several of them did say, in pronouncing the character of Washington to have been the beacon light which guided the country through that broken and stormy sea. Beacon light did I say: it was more and higher. The tempest might rage, the ocean might heave from its depths, the eternal hills might tremble upon their rocky thrones, and the bewildered needle might wander from its path, but there was one

> As constant as the northern star,
> Of whose true-fix'd and resting quality
> There is no fellow in the firmament.[8]

Reared, cradled almost, in arms,—the chieftain of two wars,—all but engaged in a third, for even in his boyhood a midshipman's warrant had been procured for him, and nothing but the fond yearnings of a mother's heart prevented his entering the British navy,—inured to military command from his youth, he sheathes his sword with all that gladness of heart with which unchastened ambition draws it:—the first in war, he becomes (O, rare union of graces!) the first in peace; and the first President of the United States was unanimously chosen in the hearts of the people; not merely in advance of the constitutional forms of elections, but without the poor machinery of caucuses and conventions by which, in later times, disinterested politicians of all parties relieve the people from the trouble of selecting their rulers.

In the first year of his administration he made his tour in the eastern States; and on the 25th of October, 1789, thirty years after his first visit, he came to Boston for the last time, the chief magistrate, unanimously chosen, of the infant confederacy. He was then fifty-seven years of age, in personal appearance not widely different from Stuart's portrait painted about six years afterwards; and he himself less powerful in the prerogatives of office than in the love and veneration of his fellow-citizens. O, that his pure example, his potent influence, his parting counsels, could bring us back the blessings of national harmony![9] O, that from the heavens to which he has ascended, his voice might even now be heard and teach us to unite again in the brotherhood of love, as we are united on one precious remembrance of the past, one glorious vision of the future, one bond of constitutional Union!

Such were the three visits of Washington to Boston; such are the three great events in his career. To do justice to his character, we must sketch the background of the picture of which he forms the most prominent personage. He has been often called, and among others by the first living parliamentary orator of England (Lord Brougham), "the greatest man of our own or of any age"; and this estimate of his character, long since pronounced by his grateful countrymen, seems to me more and more confirmed by the general assent of the reflecting portion of mankind. And if the first part of the eulogium is founded in truth, the second is not less so. Not like Alfred and Charlemagne, bright lights shining in dark ages, Washington lived in an age which, notwithstanding the illustrious names which adorn other periods of history, in many respects stands first in the annals of our race for great names, great events, great reforms, and the general progress of intelligence. The period which has elapsed from about the commencement of the last century, down nearly to our own time, and of which Washington is the brightest ornament, may be called, with propriety, the *seculum mirabile,* the age of wonders, humanly speaking, in the history of mankind. Let us, my friends, to justify this remark, and to show the grandeur of that theater on which Washington played his illustrious part, cast a rapid glance over this age, which in periods of history far distant will be designated by his name.[10]

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[8] Shakspere, *Julius Cæsar,* III. 1. 60-62.

[9] This was spoken at the time of the agitation following the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Regarding Stuart's painting, see note 7, p. 538.

[10] In the omitted paragraphs Everett sums up the world events of our Revolutionary epoch, and compares Washington with Peter the Great, Frederick the Great, and Napoleon.

But though Washington was thus great in an age of great men and great events, yet was his greatness neither borrowed nor reflected, but original. This is a trait in his character, and in that of some of his most distinguished contemporaries, not perhaps duly appreciated; that they were to a degree rarely if ever equaled, the architects of their own character, and of their country's fortunes. Enriched and instructed as we are by the bright examples, the recorded opinions, and the established institutions of the past, we reflect too little how much guidance we derive from them in the practical duties of public life! nor do we sufficiently bear in mind how many of these examples, opinions, and institutions came down to us from the age of Washington; how few go back to an earlier period, or could have been of use in the formation of his mind or the guidance of his conduct. In order fully to estimate what he was and what he did for the country, he and his associates, we must contrast America, as it was in 1732, without great events, great institutions, great traditions, and great characters, with America as it stood at his decease, rich in great events, great institutions, great traditions, and great characters, and his the greatest of them all. Our voyage is on a well-known sea, the course laid down on faithful charts, and the shores and the havens pointed out and described by those who have preceded us; Washington and the men of his age, like the great Columbus, were compelled, against adverse tempests, to sound their way along the unvisited coasts of republican government and constitutional liberty.

In the old societies of Europe (though in them, also, there is all-pervading progress, even when least favored by circumstances), and here among us, in the middle of the nineteenth century, in a proportionate degree, the relations of individual men to the masses of society, to institutions, and to preëxisting material, social, and political conditions, are far less critical than they were in America at the commencement of Washington's career. An established form and constitution of government, in some cases the slow growth of centuries, connected with it, and sometimes stronger than the government itself, an ascertained and permanent order of society, traditions public and domestic filling up the vacant places, if any such there be, not covered by the express constitutions of the state, venerable laws, and manners older than laws, and especially the accumulated examples of ages, unite in the Old World to form, to influence, and to control the individual man, far more than the individual man, however brilliant his endowments and indomitable his will, can influence, control, and change the mass. For the last three centuries certainly in Europe, the most original and self-made characters have been powerfully conditioned and controlled in their action upon society. Even in the result of great revolutions in the old countries (those, for instance, the greatest of all, in England in the middle of the seventeenth[11] and in France at the end of the eighteenth centuries), although in their progress the oldest governments were shaken to their foundations, yet the social system, after the most violent convulsions, often falls back substantially to its pre-existing conditions. What arrogant princes call legitimacy, and mistake for attachment to a family, is a struggle of the body politic to revert to a long-established type of political and constitutional organization.

Far different the case in this country previous to our constitutional age. In a little more than a century and a half, the English Colonies passed through all the stages of social and political existence which lie between the feeblest provincial infancy, and powerful, vigorously acting, earnestly projecting, self-reliant national manhood, by far the most important steps in the rapid movement having been taken in the lifetime of Washington. He was constantly called upon, he and his associates, to engage in great measures in which there was no precedent to guide them; and to display qualities of character, of which, on a larger scale, no examples were furnished by the history of the country. The first century of the settlements North and South had no doubt produced its worthy men, in Church and State, useful in their day and generation; but the population was too small in the aggregate, and scattered, without any principle of cohesion, over too wide an extent of country,—the theater was, morally speaking, too narrow, the control of means, material and political, too inconsiderable, the want of organization too absolute, to admit the formation and development of high national character, or furnish precedents for the new order of things. There was no great revolutionary struggle in the seventeenth century to afford examples to guide, or beacons to warn, the leaders of the great movement in the eighteenth; there was but a very imperfect effort at constitutional union in 1754[12] to direct the minds of men in the organic elaboration of that great idea which forms the consummation of the Revolutionary movement. I doubt if a hundred pages had been written on either side of the Potomac before the Seven Years' War, to which Washington and the men of his age could refer for such lessons as to us—drawn from the writings and examples of the Revolutionary age—are as familiar as household words. To say all in one word, there was no Washington in the seventeenth century, in the pure mirror of whose character the Washington of the eighteenth century could mold and fashion his youthful virtues, or rehearse the great part he was to act in life.

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[11] The Puritan Revolution. Charles I. was executed in 1649 and Cromwell made Lord Protector in 1653.

There was none in America, there was none in Europe, there was none in the modern world, there was none in the ancient world. I cast my eyes along the far-stretching galleries of history, still echoing to the footsteps of the mighty dead; I behold with admiration the images and the statues of the great and good men with which they are adorned; I see many who deserved well of their country in civil and military life, on the throne, in the council-chamber, on the battlefield; while they lived, wreathed with well-won laurels and scarred with honest wounds,—Hampden and William of Orange, William Tell and Robert Bruce and King Alfred, and in the olden times Cato and Tully and Demosthenes and Timoleon and Epaminondas;[13] but I behold in the long line no other Washington. I return from the search, up and down the pathways of time, grateful to the Providence which, at the solemn moment when the destinies of the continent were suspended in the balance of a doubtful future,—doubtful to human apprehension,—raised up a chieftain endowed with every quality of mind and heart to guide the fortunes of a nascent state.

If, then, we claim for Washington this solitary eminence among the great and good, the question will naturally be asked, in what the peculiar and distinctive excellence of his character consisted; and to this fair question I own, my friends, I am tasked to find an answer that does full justice to my own conceptions and feelings. It is easy to run over the heads of such a contemplation; to enumerate the sterling qualities which he possessed and the defects from which he was free; but when all is said in this way that can be said, with whatever justice of honest eulogy and whatever sympathy of appreciation, we feel that there is a depth which we have not sounded, a latent power we have not measured, a mysterious beauty of character which you can no more describe in words than you can paint a blush with a patch of red paint, or the glance of a sunbeam from a ripple with a streak of white paint thrown upon the canvas; a moral fascination, so to express it, which all feel, but which we cannot analyze nor trace to its elements. All the personal traditions of Washington assure us that there was a serene dignity in his presence, which charmed while it awed the boldest who approached him.

. . . .

It is usual, I am aware, with a certain class of writers, especially foreign writers, while they do a sort of vague justice to the character of Washington, assigning him a most eminent rank in peace and in war, as a chieftain, a magistrate, and a pure patriot, to qualify this estimate by denying to him the possession of those brilliant traits which dazzle the imagination, and to apologize for his wanting what is called genius.

Now, it is certainly of little consequence to a memory like Washington's,—a memory founded upon a life of services to his country and mankind, without a parallel in history,—to contest a point like this, which belongs rather to the criticism of language than the estimate of character. If Washington was able, under the circumstances of the utmost difficulty and danger with which he was surrounded, to conduct the war of the Revolution to an auspicious and honorable close; if confidence in him was the sheet-anchor, so to say, to which the country was moored during the anxious period of no government which succeeded the Revolution; if his influence was mainly instrumental in giving us the Constitution of the United States; and if in his eight years' administration of the chief office he set an example, which to the end of time will be the model of a patriot President; —if he was all this and did all this, without those dazzling powers of mind which constitute what is commonly meant by genius, then we may safely say, in reference at least to the conduct of affairs, that genius is an endowment of very little importance. Men will gladly exchange the qualities which fascinate the imaginations for those by which righteous wars are brought to honorable issues, families of states gathered into confederacies, wise constitutions framed, governments administered, and the happiness of states promoted. "I cannot play the fiddle," said the illustrious Grecian statesman (a man, however, not to be named in the same day with Washington for purity and elevation of character),—"I cannot play the fiddle," said Themistocles;[14] "but I can make a small town into a great city."

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[12] In June, 1754, delegates from the New England colonies, New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, met at Albany and adopted a resolution that "A union of all the colonies is at present absolutely necessary for their security and defense." But the efforts to form such a union failed. See page 123, (Franklin's *Autobiography*).

[13] Hampden, one of the daring opponents of Charles I; William of Orange, the leader of Holland against Spain; Tell, the legendary leader of the Swiss in their struggle for independence; Bruce, the Scottish hero and king; Alfred, the early upbuilder of England; Cato and Marcus Tullius Cicero (Tully), Roman statesmen; Timoleon and Epaminondas, Greek generals.

But, so far from regarding the absence of brilliant qualities as a defect, I am disposed to place the distinctive beauty and excellence of Washington's character in that well balanced aggregate of powers and virtues for which he was distinguished, and which necessarily excludes the possession of one or two highly developed prominent traits. No one, I think, who has carefully reflected on the subject, but will come to the conclusion that, instead of being improved, his character would have been impaired by any such dazzling quality, especially when we take into account the defects with which such qualities are sure to be accompanied. The ardent and ungoverned temperament, the indomitable will (often another name for arrogant obstinacy and selfishness), the passionate love of distinction and applause, which enter so largely in most cases into what is called a brilliant public character, would have destroyed the beauty and broken down the strength of Washington's. The ancient philosophers placed the true conception of perfect manhood in the possession of those powers and qualities which are required for the honorable and successful discharge of the duties of life, each in the golden mean, equally removed from excess in either direction, and all in due proportion. This type of true greatness I find more fully realized in the character of Washington than in that of any other chieftain or ruler of ancient or modern times. He did not possess a few brilliant qualities in that exaggerated degree in which they are habitually ascribed to the heroes of poetry and romance; but he united all the qualities required for the honorable and successful conduct of the greatest affairs, each in the happy mean of a full maturity, and all in that true proportion in which they balance and sustain each other.

Now the popular estimate of character knows nothing of this golden mean and harmonious adjustment. In the chieftain, it coldly approves a thoughtful valor, and loves the gallant rashness which finds a joy in the maddening conflict. In the magistrate, it faintly applauds a discreet and well weighed system of public measures, but it does not frown on the selfish management of the artful maneuverer, and delights in the success which occasionally follows an audacious *coup d'état*.[15] In the senate or on the platform it listens with respectful, often with constrained, attention to the voice of well-urged reason and argument, but yields itself a willing captive to the specious declamation, which often misleads the judgment while it delights the ear, and sometimes maddens while it charms.

But, above all, it belongs to a well balanced character like Washington's that it should include the grave, sober, and, I am sorry to add, the unpopular qualities. Such a virtue, for instance, is prudence, which, according to the stern Roman satirist,[16] disarms fortune of her power. Consummate prudence marked the life and conduct of Washington. But in the inverted estimate of the world, prudence receives no applause, excites no admiration, wins no love. We sometimes almost hate it for the restraints which it imposes upon the endearing weaknesses and generous follies of a warm and kindly nature.

Justice is another of the great kingly virtues of life; the governments of men, the government of God on high, rest upon it. Justice was personified in Washington; it was the law of his life. But justice is not a quality that fascinates the imaginations of men. Moralists inculcate it, all men exact it in their dealings when it promotes their interests; the Athenians, at the height of their refinement, grew tired of it in the person of Aristides,[17] and banished it.

Modesty is a lovely trait, which sets the last seal to a truly great character, as the blush of innocence adds the last charm to youthful beauty. When, on his return from one of his arduous campaigns in the Seven Years' War, the Speaker of the Virginia Assembly, by order of the House, addressed

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[14] An Athenian statesman and commander. (See note 14, p. 55.)

[15] A sudden stroke of policy or state-craft.

[16] "*Nullum numen habes si sit prudentia.*" "Thou (fortune) hast no power where prudence exists." Juvenal *Satires*, X. 365.

[17] A very noble Greek general and statesman who in 483 B. C. was ostracized through the influence of the jealous Themistocles.

Colonel Washington in acknowledgment of his services, the youthful hero rose to reply; but humility choked his utterance, diffidence sealed his lips. "Sit down, Colonel Washington," said the Speaker; "the House sees that your modesty is equal to your merit, and that exceeds my power of language to describe." But who ever heard of a modest Alexander or a modest Caesar, or a modest hero or statesman of the present day?—much as some of them would be improved by a measure of that quality.

Common sense was eminently a characteristic of Washington; so called, not because it is so very common a trait of character of public men, but because it is the final judgment on great practical questions to which the mind of the community is pretty sure eventually to arrive. Few qualities of character in those who influence the fortunes of nations are so conducive both to stability and progress. But it is a quality which takes no hold of the imagination; it inspires no enthusiasm, it wins no favor; it is well if it can stand its ground against the plausible absurdities the hollow pretences, the stupendous impostures of the day.

But, however these unobtrusive and austere virtues may be overlooked in the popular estimate, they belong unquestionably to the true type of sterling greatness, reflecting as far as it can be done within the narrow limits of humanity that deep repose and silent equilibrium of mental and moral power which governs the universe. To complain of the character of Washington that it is destitute of brilliant qualities, is to complain of a circle that it has no salient points and no sharp angles in its circumference; forgetting that it owes all its wonderful properties to the unbroken curve of which every point is equidistant from the center. Instead, therefore, of being a mark of inferiority, this sublime adjustment of powers and virtues in the character of Washington is in reality its glory. It is this which chiefly puts him in harmony with more than human greatness. The higher we rise in the scale of being,—material, intellectual, and moral,—the more certainly we quit the region of the brilliant eccentricities and dazzling contrasts which belong to a vulgar greatness. Order and proportion characterize the primordial constitution of the terrestrial system; ineffable harmony rules the heavens. All the great eternal forces act in solemn silence. The brawling torrent that dries up in summer deafens you with its roaring whirlpools in March; while the vast earth on which we dwell, with all its oceans and all its continents and its thousand millions of inhabitants, revolves unheard upon its soft axle at the rate of a thousand miles an hour, and rushes noiselessly on its orbit a million and a half miles a day. Two storm-clouds encamped upon opposite hills on a sultry summer's evening, at the expense of no more electricity, according to Mr. Faraday,[18] than is evolved in the decomposition of a single drop of water, will shake the surrounding atmosphere with their thunders, which, loudly as they rattle on the spot, will yet not be heard at the distance of twenty miles; while those tremendous and unutterable forces which ever issue from the throne of God, and drag the chariot wheels of Uranus and Neptune[19] along the uttermost path-ways of the solar system, pervade the illimitable universe in silence.

This calm and well-balanced temperament of Washington's character is not badly shadowed forth in the poet's description of Cicero:—

> This magistrate hath struck an awe into
>   me,
> And by his sweetness won a more regard
> Unto his place, than all the boisterous
>   moods
> That ignorant greatness practiceth to fill
> The large unfit authority it wears.
> How easy is a noble spirit discerned
> From harsh and sulphurous matter, that
>   flies out
> In contumelies, makes a noise, and
>   bursts.[20]

And did I say, my friends, that I was unable to furnish an entirely satisfactory answer to the question, in what the true excellence of the character of Washington consists? Let me recall the word as unjust to myself and unjust to you. The answer is plain and simple enough; it is this, that all the great qualities of disposition and action, which so eminently fitted him for the service of his fellowmen, were founded on the basis of a pure Christian morality, and derived their strength and energy from that vital source. He was great as he was good; he was great because he was good; and I believe, as I do in my existence, that it was an important part of the design of Providence in raising him up to be the leader of the Revolutionary struggle, and afterwards the first President of the United States, to rebuke prosperous ambition and successful intrigue; to set before the people of America, in the morning of their national existence, a living example to prove that armies may be best conducted, and governments most ably and honorably administered, by men of sound moral principle; to teach to gifted and aspiring individuals, and the parties they lead, that, though a hundred crooked paths may conduct to a temporary success, the one plain and straight path of public and private virtue can alone lead to a pure and lasting fame and the blessings of posterity.

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[18] Michael Faraday, 1791-1867, a noted English chemist and physicist.

[19] The two outermost planets in the solar system, Neptune being 2,800,000,000 miles distant from the sun and taking 164 years to perform its revolution about it.

[20] From Ben Jonson's *Catiline*, IV. i. 45.

Born beneath an humble[21] but virtuous roof, brought up at the knees of a mother not unworthy to be named with the noblest matrons of Rome or Israel, the "good boy," as she delighted to call him, passed uncorrupted through the temptations of the solitary frontier, the camp, and the gay world, and grew up into a good man. Engaging in early youth in the service of the country, rising rapidly to the highest trusts, office and influence and praise passing almost the bounds of human desert did nothing to break down the austere simplicity of his manners or to shake the solid basis of his virtues. Placed at the head of the suffering and discontented armies of his country, urged by the tempter to change his honest and involuntary dictatorship of influence into a usurped dictatorship of power,[22] reluctantly consenting to one re-election to the Presidency and positively rejecting a second, no suspicion ever crossed the mind of an honest man,—let the libellers say what they would, for libellers I am sorry to say there were in that day as in this, men who pick their daily dishonorable bread out of the characters of men as virtuous as themselves,—and they spared not Washington,—but the suspicion never entered into the mind of an honest man, that his heart was open to the seductions of ambition or interest; or that he was capable in the slightest degree, by word or deed, of shaping his policy with a view to court popular favor or serve a selfish end; that a wish or purpose ever entered his mind inconsistent with the spotless purity of his character.

. . . .

1856 1856

CHARLES SUMNER

Born, Boston, 1811, died, Washington, 1874. Sumner graduated from Harvard in 1830 and for ten years studied and practiced law, wrote upon legal subjects, and traveled abroad. From 1840 he was in political life; though independent of strict party lines, he was active in the anti-slavery cause. From 1851 until his death he was United States senator from Massachusetts. His speeches in the Senate and elsewhere constitute his best-known literary work.

From THE TRUE GRANDEUR OF NATIONS[1]

In accordance with uninterrupted usage, on this Sabbath of the nation, we have put aside our daily cares, and seized a respite from the never-ending toils of life, to meet in gladness and congratulation, mindful of the blessings transmitted from the past, mindful also, I trust, of our duties to the present and the future.

All hearts turn first to the Fathers of the Republic. Their venerable forms rise before us, in the procession of successive generations. They come from the frozen rock of Plymouth, from the wasted bands of Raleigh, from the heavenly companionship of Penn, from the anxious councils of the Revolution, —from all those fields of sacrifice, where, in obedience to the spirit of their age, they sealed their devotion to duty with their blood. They say to us, their children, "Cease to vaunt what you do, and what has been done for you. Learn to walk meekly and to think humbly. Cultivate habits of self-sacrifice. Never aim at what is not RIGHT, persuaded that without this every possession and all knowledge will become an evil and a shame. And may these words of ours be ever in your minds! Strive to increase the inheritance we have bequeathed to you,—bearing in mind always, that, if we excel you in virtue, such a victory will be to us a mortification, while defeat will bring happiness. In his way you may conquer us. Nothing is more shameful for a man than a claim to esteem, not on his own merits, but on the fame of his ancestors. The glory of the fathers is doubtless to their children a most precious treasure; but to enjoy it without transmission to the next generation, and without addition, is the extreme of ignominy. Following these counsels, when your days on earth are finished, you will come to join us, and we shall receive you as friend receives friend; but if you neglect our words, expect no happy greeting from us."

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[21] Washington was born "in the homestead on Bridges Creek. This house . . . had probably been purchased with the property and was one of the primitive farmhouses of Virginia." Irving, *Life of Washington*. The Washington family was, however, among the wealthiest in Virginia.

[22] In the spring of 1782 there came to be a growing distrust of Congress, owing to its inability to pay the soldiers. A letter written to Washington by Colonel Louis Nicola, a foreigner by birth, a colonel of Pennsylvania troops, urged him to save his country by becoming king. "Washington instantly replied that Nicola could not have found a person to whom such a scheme could be more odious and he was at a loss to conceive what he had ever done to have it supposed that he could for one moment listen to a suggestion so fraught with mischief to his country." Fiske, *Critical Period*, p. 107.

[1] This, Sumner's first great oration, was delivered July 4, 1845, in the Old South Church, Boston, before the authorities of the city. To Sumner, war then meant aggrandizement and conquest.

Honor to the memory of our fathers! May the turf lie lightly on their sacred graves! Not in words only, but in deeds also, let us testify our reverence for their name, imitating what in them was lofty, pure, and good, learning from them to bear hardship and privation. May we, who now reap in strength what they sowed in weakness, augment the inheritance we have received! To this end, we must not fold our hands in slumber, nor abide content with the past. To each generation is appointed its peculiar task; nor does the heart which responds to the call of duty find rest except in the grave.

Be ours the task now in the order of Providence cast upon us. And what is this duty? What can we do to make our coming welcome to our fathers in the skies, and draw to our memory hereafter the homage of a grateful posterity? How add to the inheritance received? The answer must interest all, particularly on this festival, when we celebrate the nativity of the Republic. It well becomes the patriot citizen, on this anniversary, to consider the national character, and how it may be advanced,—as the good man dedicates his birthday to meditation on his life, and to resolutions of improvement.

Avoiding, then, all exultation in the abounding prosperity of the land, and in that freedom whose influence is widening to the uttermost circles of the earth, I would turn attention to the character of our country, and humbly endeavor to learn what must be done that the Republic may best secure the welfare of the people committed to its care,—that it may perform its part in the world's history,—that it may fulfil the aspirations of generous hearts,—and, practicing that righteousness which exalteth a nation, attain to the elevation of true grandeur.

With this aim, and believing that I can in no other way so fitly fulfil the trust reposed in me today, I purpose to consider *what, in our age, are the true objects of national ambition,—what is truly national honor, national glory,*—WHAT IS THE TRUE GRANDEUR OF NATIONS. I would not depart from the modesty that becomes me, yet I am not without hope that I may do something to rescue these terms, now so powerful over the minds of men, from mistaken objects, especially from deeds of war, and the extension of empire, that they may be applied to works of justice and beneficence, which are better than war or empire.

The subject may be novel, on an occasion like the present; but it is comprehensive, and of transcendent importance. It raises us to the contemplation of things not temporary or local, but belonging to all ages and countries,—things lofty as truth, universal as humanity. Nay, more; it practically concerns the general welfare, not only of our own cherished republic, but of the whole federation of nations. It has an urgent interest from transactions in which we are now unhappily involved. By an act of unjust legislation, extending our power over Texas, peace with Mexico is endangered,—while, by petulant assertion of a disputed claim to a remote territory beyond the Rocky Mountains,[2] ancient fires of hostile strife are kindled anew on the hearth of our mother country. Mexico and England both avow the determination to vindicate what is called the *national honor;* and our Government calmly contemplates the dread arbitrament of war, provided it cannot obtain what is called an honorable peace.

. . . .

Can there be in our age any peace that is not honorable, any war that is not dishonorable? The true honor of a nation is conspicuous only in deeds of justice and beneficence, securing and advancing human happiness. In the clear eye of that Christian judgment which must yet prevail, vain are the victories of war, infamous its spoils. He is the benefactor, and worthy of honor, who carries comfort to wretchedness, dries the tear of sorrow, relieves the unfortunate, feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, does justice, enlightens the ignorant, unfastens the fetters of the slave, and finally, by virtuous genius, in art, literature, science, enlivens and exalts the hours of life, or, by generous example, inspires a love for God and man. This is the Christian hero; this is the man of honor in a Christian land. He is no benefactor, nor worthy of honor, whatever his worldly renown, whose life is absorbed in feats of brute force, who renounces the great law of Christian brotherhood, whose vocation is blood. Well may the modern poet exclaim, "The world knows nothing of its greatest men!"[3]—for thus far it has chiefly honored the violent brood of battle, armed men springing up from the dragon's teeth sown by hate, and cared little for the truly good men, children of love, guiltless of their country's blood, whose steps on earth are noiseless as an angel's wing.

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[2] The annexation of Texas to the United States in 1845, increasing, as it did, the slave territory, was strongly opposed by the Free-Soilers, of whom Sumner was one, who favored admitting new states or territories only on condition that slavery should be excluded. Mexico strongly opposed the admission of Texas to the United States because it had been Mexican territory previous to its independence. The "Oregon Country," which both England and the United States claimed, included all Pacific coast territory between 42° and 54° 40′—that is most of our Pacific Northwest and much of British Columbia. Concession on both sides resulted in the adoption in 1846 of 49° as the boundary line.

It will not be disguised that this standard differs from that of the world even in our day. The voice of man is yet given to martial praise, and the honors of victory are chanted even by the lips of woman. The mother, rocking the infant on her knee, stamps the images of war upon his tender mind, at that age more impressible than wax; she nurses his slumber with its music, pleases his waking hours with its stories, and selects for his playthings the plume and the sword. From the child is formed the man; and who can weigh the influence of a mother's spirit on the opinions of his life? The mind which trains the child is like a hand at the end of a long lever; a gentle effort suffices to heave the enormous weight of succeeding years. As the boy advances to youth, he is fed like Achilles, not only on honey and milk only, but on bears' marrow and lions' hearts.[4] He draws the nutriment of his soul from a literature whose beautiful fields are moistened by human blood. Fain would I offer my tribute to the Father of Poetry, standing with harp of immortal melody on the misty mountain-top of distant antiquity,—to those stories of courage and sacrifice which emblazon the annals of Greece and Rome,—to the fulminations of Demosthenes and the splendors of Tully,—to the sweet verse of Virgil and the poetic prose of Livy; fain would I offer my tribute to the new literature, which shot up in modern times as a vigorous forest from the burnt side of ancient woods,—to the passionate song of the Troubadour in France and the Minnesinger in Germany,[5]—to the thrilling ballad of Spain and the delicate music of the Italian lyre: but from all these has breathed the breath of war, that has swept the heart-strings of men in all the thronging generations.

And when the youth becomes a man, his country invites his service in war, and holds before his bewildered imagination the prizes of worldly honor. For him the pen of the historian and the verse of the poet. His soul is taught to swell at the thought that he, too, is a soldier,—that his name shall be entered on the list of those who have borne arms for their country; and perhaps he dreams that he, too, may sleep, like the Great Captain of Spain,[6] with a hundred trophies over his grave. The law of the land throws its sanction over this frenzy. The contagion spreads beyond those subject to positive obligation. Peaceful citizens volunteer to appear as soldiers, and affect, in dress, arms, and deportment, what is called the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war." The ear-piercing fife has today filled our streets, and we have come to this church, on this National Sabbath, by the thump of drum and with the parade of bristling bayonets.[7]

. . . .

From prejudices engendered by the Church I pass to prejudices engendered by the army itself, having their immediate origin in military life, but unfortunately diffusing themselves throughout the community, in widening, though less apparent circles. I allude directly to what is called *the Point of Honor*, early child of Chivalry, living representative of its barbarism. It is difficult to define what is so evanescent, so impalpable, so chimerical, so unreal, and yet which exercises such fiendish power over many men, and controls the intercourse of nations. As a little water, fallen into the crevice of a rock, under the congelation of winter, swells till it bursts the thick and stony fibers, so a word or slender act, dropping into the heart of man, under the hardening influence of this pernicious sentiment, dilates till it rends in pieces the sacred depository of human affection, and the demons hate and strife are left to rage. The musing Hamlet saw this sentiment in its strange and unnatural potency, when his soul pictured to his contemplations an

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[3] Sir Henry Taylor, 1800-1886, in his drama *Philip Van Arteveld*, I, 1:5.

[4] Tradition later than Homer, the "Father of Poetry," relates that Achilles was fed by Thetis, his mother, with milk and honey, but by Chiron, his centaur-tutor, upon lions' hearts and bears' meat.

[5] The Troubadours and the Minnesingers were medieval lyric poets of France and Germany, respectively.

[6] Probably the Cid, the great national hero of Spanish romance. See note 11, p. 462.

[7] The vigorous explanation of what war is and of the obstacles to peace, which follows, is too long to include.

> army of such mass and charge,
> Led by a delicate and tender prince, . . .
> Exposing what is mortal and unsure
> To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
> *Even for an egg-shell;*

and when, again, giving to the sentiment its strongest and most popular expression, he exclaims,—

> Rightly to be great
> Is not to stir without great argument,
> *But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,*
> *When honor's at the stake.*[8]

And when is honor at stake? This inquiry opens again the argument with which I commenced, and with which I hope to close. Honor can be at stake only where justice and beneficence are at stake; it can never depend on egg-shell or straw; it can never depend on any hasty word of anger or folly, not even if followed by vulgar violence. True honor appears in the dignity of the human soul, in that highest moral and intellectual excellence which is the nearest approach to qualities we reverence as attributes of God. Our community frowns with indignation upon the profaneness of the duel, having its rise in this irrational *point of honor.* Are you aware that you indulge the same sentiment on a gigantic scale, when you recognize this very point of honor as a proper apology for war? We have already seen that justice is in no respect promoted by war. Is true honor promoted where justice is not?

The very word honor, as used by the world, fails to express any elevated sentiment. How immeasurably below the sentiment of duty! It is a word of easy virtue, that has been prostituted to the most opposite characters and transactions. From the field of Pavia,[9] where France suffered one of the worst reverses in her annals, the defeated king writes to his mother, "All is lost, except honor." At a later day, the renowned French cook, Vatel,[10] in a paroxysm of grief and mortification at the failure of two dishes for the table, exclaims, "I have lost my *honor!*" and stabs himself to the heart. Montesquieu,[11] whose writings are constellations of epigrams, calls honor a prejudice only, which he places in direct contrast with virtue,—the former being the animating principle of monarchy, and the latter the animating principle of a republic; but he reveals the inferiority of honor, as a principle, when he adds, that, in a well-governed monarchy, almost everybody is a good citizen, while it is rare to meet a really good man. The man of honor is not the man of virtue. By an instinct pointing to the truth, we do not apply this term to the high columnar qualities which sustain and decorate life, —parental affection, justice, benevolence, the attributes of God. He would seem to borrow a feebler phrase, showing a slight appreciation of the distinctive character to whom reverence is accorded, who should speak of father, mother, judge, angel, or finally of God, as *persons of honor.* In such sacred connections, we feel, beyond the force of any argument, the mundane character of the sentiment which plays such a part in history and even in common life.

The rule of honor is founded in the imagined necessity of resenting by force a supposed injury, whether of word or act. Admit the injury received, seeming to sully the character; is it wiped away by any force, and descent to the brutal level of its author? "Could I wipe your blood from my conscience as easily as this insult from my face," said a Marshal of France, greater on this occasion than on any field of battle, "I would lay you dead at my feet." Plato, reporting the angelic wisdom of Socrates, declares, in one of those beautiful dialogues shining with stellar light across the ages, that *to do a wrong is more shameful than to receive a wrong.* And this benign sentiment commends itself alike to the Christian, who is bid to render good for evil, and to the enlightened soul of man. But who confessing its truth will resort to force on any point of *honor?*

. . . .

And now, if it be asked, why, in considering the TRUE GRANDEUR OF NATIONS, I dwell thus singly and exclusively on war, it is because war is utterly and irreconcilably inconsistent with true greatness. Thus far, man has worshiped in military glory a phantom idol, compared with which the colossal images of ancient Babylon or modern Hindostan are but toys; and we, in this favored land of freedom, in this blessed day of light, are among the idolators. The Heaven-descended injunction, *Know thyself,* still speaks to an unheeding world from the far-off letters of gold at Delphi:[12] *Know thyself; know that the moral is the noblest part of man,* transcending far that which is the seat of passion, strife, and war,—nobler than the intellect itself. And the human heart, in its untutored, spontaneous homage to the virtues of peace, declares the same truth,—admonishing the military idolator that it is not the bloody combats, even of bravest chiefs, even of gods themselves, as they echo from the resounding lines of the great poet of war, which receive the warmest admiration, but those two scenes where are painted the gentle, unwarlike affections of our nature, the parting of Hector from Andromache, and the supplication of Priam. In the definitive election of these peaceful pictures, the soul of man, inspired by a better wisdom than that of books, and drawn unconsciously by the heavenly attraction of what is truly great, acknowledges, in touching instances, the vanity of military glory. The beatitudes of Christ, which shrink from saying, "Blessed are the war-makers," inculcate the same lesson. Reason affirms and repeats what the heart has prompted and Christianity proclaimed. Suppose war decided by *force,* where is the glory? Suppose it decided by *chance,* where is the glory? Surely, in other ways true greatness lies. Nor is it difficult to tell where.

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[8] *Hamlet,* IV. iv. 47-55.

[9] The French under Francis I were defeated at Pavia, in 1525, by the armies of Emperor Charles V.

[10] Steward of the Prince of Condé, a seventeenth century French nobleman.

[11] The French philosophical historian. See *L'Esprit des Lois,* iii. 3-8.

True greatness consists in imitating, as nearly as possible for finite man, the perfections of an infinite Creator,—above all, in cultivating those highest perfections, justice and love: justice, which, like that of St. Louis, does not swerve to the right hand or to the left; love, which, like that of William Penn, regards all mankind as of kin. "God is angry," says Plato, "when any one censures a man like Himself, *or praises a man of an opposite character:* and the godlike man is the good man." Again, in another of those lovely dialogues precious with immortal truth: "Nothing resembles God more than that man among us who has attained to the highest degree of justice." The true greatness of nations is in those qualities which constitute the true greatness of the individual. It is not in extent of territory, or vastness of population, or accumulation of wealth,—not in fortifications, or armies, or navies,—not in the sulphurous blaze of battle,—not in Golgothas,[13] though covered by monuments that kiss the clouds; for all these are creatures and representatives of those qualities in our nature which are unlike anything in God's nature. Nor is it in triumphs of the intellect alone,—in literature, learning, science, or art. The polished Greeks, our masters in the delights of art, and the commanding Romans, overawing the earth with their power, were little more than splendid savages. And the age of Louis the Fourteenth[14] of France, spanning so long a period of ordinary worldly magnificence, thronged by marshals bending under military laurels, enlivened by the unsurpassed comedy of Moliere, dignified by the tragic genius of Corneille, illumined by the splendors of Bossuet,[15] is degraded by immoralities that cannot be mentioned without a blush, by a heartlessness in comparison with which the ice of Nova Zembla is warm, and by a succession of deeds of injustice not to be washed out by the tears of all the recording angels of Heaven.

The true greatness of a nation cannot be in triumphs of the intellect alone. Literature and art may enlarge the sphere of its influence; they may adorn it; but in their nature they are but accessories. *The true grandeur of humanity is in moral elevation, sustained, enlightened, and decorated by the intellect of man.* The surest tokens of this grandeur in a nation are that Christian beneficence which diffuses the greatest happiness among all, and that passionless, godlike justice which controls the relations of the nation to other nations, and to all the people committed to its charge.

But war crushes with bloody heel all beneficence, all happiness, all justice, all that is godlike in man,—suspending every commandment of the decalogue, setting at naught every principle of the Gospel, and silencing all law, human as well as divine, except only that impious code of its own, the *Laws of War.* If in its dismal annals there is any cheerful passage, be assured it is not inspired by a martial fury. Let it not be forgotten, let it be ever borne in mind, as you ponder this theme, that the virtues which shed their charm over its horrors are all borrowed of peace,—that they are emanations from the spirit of love, which is so strong in the heart of man that it survives the rudest assault. The flowers of gentleness, kindliness, fidelity, humanity, which flourish unregarded in the rich meadows of peace, receive unwonted admiration when we discern them in war,—like violets shedding their perfume on the perilous edge of the precipice, beyond the smiling borders of civilization.[16] God be praised for all the examples of magnanimous virtue which he has vouchsafed to mankind! God be praised, that the Roman Emperor,[17] about to start on a distant expedition of war, encompassed by squadrons of cavalry, and by golden eagles swaying in the wind, stooped from his saddle to hear the prayer of a humble widow, demanding justice for the death of her son! God be praised, that Sidney,[18] on the field of battle, gave with dying hand the cup of cold water to the dying soldier! That single act of self-forgetful sacrifice has consecrated the deadly field of Zutphen, far, oh, far beyond its battle; it has consecrated thy name, gallant Sidney, beyond any feat of thy sword, beyond any triumph of thy pen! But there are lowly supplicants in other places than the camp; there are hands outstretched elsewhere than on fields of blood. Everywhere is opportunity for deeds of like charity. Know well that these are not the product of war. They do not spring from enmity, hatred, and strife, but from those benign sentiments whose natural and ripened fruit of joy and blessing are found only in peace. If at any time they appear in the soldier, it is less *because* than *notwithstanding* he is the hireling of battle. Let me not be told, then, of the virtues of war. Let not the acts of generosity and sacrifice sometimes blossoming on its fields be invoked in its defense. From such a giant root of bitterness no true good can spring. The poisonous tree,[19] in Oriental imagery, though watered by nectar and covered with roses, produces only the fruit of death.

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[12] In the vestibule of the temple at Delphi were written in golden letters sayings of the mythical Seven Wise Men of Greece.

[13] Golgotha was the place of the crucifixion.

[14] The material wealth, extravagance, and luxury of his reign, 1643-1715, was equaled only by its selfishness, absolutism, and tyranny.

[15] A prelate and orator.

Casting our eyes over the history of nations, with horror we discern the succession of murderous slaughters by which their progress is marked. Even as the hunter follows the wild beast to his lair by the drops of blood on the ground, so we follow man, faint, weary, staggering with wounds, through the Black Forest of the past, which he has reddened with his gore. Oh, let it not be in the future ages as in those we now contemplate! Let the grandeur of man be discerned, not in bloody victory or ravenous conquest, but in the blessings he has secured, in the good he has accomplished, in the triumphs of justice and beneficence, in the establishment of perpetual peace!

As ocean washes every shore, and with all-embracing arms clasps every land, while on its heaving bosom it bears the products of various climes, so peace surrounds, protects, and upholds all other blessings. Without it, commerce is vain, the order of industry is restrained, justice is arrested, happiness is blasted, virtue sickens and dies.

. . . .

Far be from us, fellow citizens, on this festival, the pride of national victory, and the illusion of national freedom, in which we are too prone to indulge! None of you make rude boast of individual prosperity or prowess. And here I end as I began. Our country cannot do what an individual cannot do. Therefore it must not vaunt or be puffed up. Rather bend to unperformed duties. Independence is not all. We have but half done, when we have made ourselves free. The scornful taunt wrung from bitter experience of the great Revolution in France must not be leveled at us: "They wish to be *free*, but know not how to be *just*."[20] Nor is priceless freedom an end in itself, but rather the means of justice and beneficence, where alone is enduring concord, with that attendant happiness which is the final end and aim of nations, as of every human heart. It is not enough to be free. There must be peace which cannot fail, and other nations must share the great possession. For this good must we labor, bearing ever in mind two special objects, complements of each other: first, the arbitrament of war must end; and, secondly, disarmament must begin. With this ending and this beginning the great gates of the future will be opened, and the guardian virtues will assert a new empire. Alas! until this is done, national honor and national glory will yet longer flaunt in blood, and there can be no true grandeur of nations.

To this great work let me summon you. That future, which filled the lofty visions of sages and bards in Greece and Rome, which was foretold by prophets and heralded by evangelists, when man, in happy isles or in a new paradise, shall confess the loveliness of peace, may you secure, if not for yourselves, at least for your children! *Believe* that you can do it, and you *can* do it. The true golden age is before, not behind. If man has once been driven from paradise, while an angel with flaming sword forbade his return, there is another paradise, even on earth, which he may make for himself, by the cultivation of knowledge, religion, and the kindly virtues of life, where the confusion of tongues shall be dissolved in the union of hearts, and joyous nature, borrowing prolific charms from prevailing harmony, shall spread her lap with unimagined bounty, and there shall be perpetual jocund Spring, and sweet strains borne on "the odoriferous wing of gentle gales," through valleys of delight, more pleasant than the Vale of Tempe,[21] richer than the garden of the Hesperides, with no dragon to guard its golden fruit.

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[16] Note the ornateness of the oratory of Sumner's time as compared with that of the present.

[17] Trajan, whose kind deed Dante has made immortal in his *Purgatorio*, x. 76.

[18] Sir Philip Sidney, 1554-1586, was mortally wounded on the battlefield of Zutphen in the Netherlands.

[19] Possibly the upas tree concerning which many fabulous tales have been told.

[20] A saying of Abbé Sieyès, a French statesman, 1748-1836.

It is said that the age does not demand this work. The robber conqueror of the past, from fiery sepulcher demands it; the precious blood of millions unjustly shed in war, crying from the ground, demands it; the heart of the good man demands it, the conscience, even of the soldier whispers, "Peace." There are considerations, springing from our situation and condition, which fervently invite us to take the lead. Here should join the patriotic ardor of the land, the ambition of the statesman, the effort of the scholar, the pervasive influence of the press, the mild persuasion of the sanctuary, the early teaching of the school. Here, in ampler ether and diviner air, are untried fields for exalted triumph, more truly worthy the American name than any snatched from rivers of blood. War is known as the *last reason of kings*. Let it be no reason of our Republic. Let us renounce and throw off forever the yoke of tyranny most oppressive of all in the world's annals. As those standing on the mountain-top first discern the coming beams of morning, so may we from the vantage-ground of liberal institutions, first recognize the ascending sun of a new era! Lift high the gates, and let the King of Glory in,—the King of true Glory,—of Peace! I catch the last words of music from the lips of innocence and beauty:—

"And let the whole earth be filled with His glory!"

It is a beautiful picture in Grecian story, that there was at least one spot, the small island of Delos, dedicated to the gods, and kept at all times sacred from war. No hostile foot ever pressed this kindly soil, and citizens of all countries met here, in common worship, beneath the ægis of inviolable peace. So let us dedicate our beloved country; and may the blessed consecration be felt, in all its parts, everywhere throughout its ample domain! The Temple of Honor shall be enclosed by the Temple of Concord, that it may never more be entered through any portal of war; the horn of abundance shall overflow at its gates; the angel of religion shall be the guide over its steps of flashing adamant; while within its happy courts, purged of violence and wrong, JUSTICE, returned to the earth from long exile in the skies, with equal scales for nations as for men, shall rear her serene and majestic front; and by her side, greatest of all, CHARITY, sublime in meekness, hoping all and enduring all, shall divinely temper every righteous decree, and with words of infinite cheer inspire to those deeds that cannot vanish away. And the future chief of the Republic, destined to uphold the glories of a new era, unspotted by human blood, shall be first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen.

While seeking these fruitful glories for ourselves, let us strive for their extension to other lands. Let the bugles sound the *Truce of God*[22] to the whole world forever. Not to one people, but to every people, let the glad tidings go. The selfish boast of the Spartan women, that they never saw the smoke of an enemy's camp, must become the universal chorus of mankind, while the iron belt of war, now encompassing the globe, is exchanged for the golden cestus of peace, clothing all with celestial beauty. History dwells with fondness on the reverent homage bestowed by massacring soldiers, upon the spot occupied by the sepulcher of the Lord; vain man! Why confine regard to a few feet of sacred mold? The whole earth is the sepulcher of the Lord; nor can any righteous man profane any part thereof. Confessing this truth let us now, on this Sabbath of the Nation, lay a new and living stone in the grand Temple of Universal Peace, whose dome shall be lofty as the firmament of heaven, broad and comprehensive as earth itself.

1845 1845

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[21] A valley in Greece famed for its beauty.

[22] A suspension of private feuds from Thursday evening to Monday morning for the celebration of church festivals, common in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Born in Hardin County, Kentucky, 1809, died, Washington, 1865. Lincoln's immediate ancestors were frontiersmen in straitened circumstances, woodsmen, farmers. Removing with his father to Indiana and then to Illinois, he obtained in the aggregate perhaps a year's schooling, helped clear a pioneer farm, was flat-boat hand on the Mississippi, soldier in the Black Hawk War, postmaster, surveyor, member of the legislature, lawyer, and at length member of Congress in 1846. His education thus far was through the study of the law and through reading the Bible, Shakspere, Bunyan, and such American biography and political literature as fell in his way. In 1858, as Republican candidate for the United States Senate from Illinois, he met his opponent, Douglas, in a series of debates that made him more than locally known. In 1860 and 1864 he was elected President of the United States. He was assassinated April 14, 1865, a few days after the downfall of the Confederacy.

FAREWELL ADDRESS AT SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS[1]

My Friends: No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell.

1861 1861

ADDRESS IN INDEPENDENCE HALL, PHILADELPHIA[2]

Mr. Cuyler: I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing in this place, where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live. You have kindly suggested to me that in my hands is the task of restoring peace to our distracted country. I can say in return, sir, that all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I have been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated in and were given to the world from this hall. I have never had a feeling, politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. I have often pondered over the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here and framed and adopted that Declaration. I have pondered over the toils that were endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but hope to all the world, for all future time. It was that which gave promise that in due time the weights would be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved on that basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help to save it. If it cannot be saved upon that principle, it will be truly awful. But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it. Now, in my view of the present aspect of affairs, there is no need of bloodshed and war. There is no necessity for it. I am not in favor of such a course; and I may say in advance that there will be no bloodshed unless it is forced upon the government. The government will not use force, unless force is used against it.

My friends, this is wholly an unprepared speech. I did not expect to be called on to say a word when I came here. I supposed I was merely to do something toward raising a flag. I may, therefore, have said something indiscreet. But I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and, if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, to die by.

1861 1861

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[1] Delivered Feb. 11, 1861, on Lincoln's departure from Springfield to assume the Presidency.

[2] Delivered Feb. 22, 1861. Theodore Cuyler, who presided at the meeting, was a prominent lawyer of Philadelphia and a War-Democrat; that is, a Democrat who believed that the Union should be maintained even at the cost of war. He therefore favored Lincoln's Republican administration.

THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS[1]

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us,—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

1863 1863

THE SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS[2]

Fellow-countrymen: At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured.

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came.

One eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union, even by war; while the government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes his aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered—that of neither has been answered fully.

The Almighty has his own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh."[3] If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."[4]

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[1] Delivered November 19, 1863, at the dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg. The battle of Gettysburg, July 1-3, 1863, one of the bloodiest in American history, is generally conceded to have been the turning point in the Civil War. This speech has passed into the permanent literature of the English tongue, while the long, formal address which preceded it, delivered by Edward Everett, the orator of the occasion, is forgotten.

[2] Delivered March 4, 1865.

[3] *Matthew* xviii. 7.

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.

1865 1865

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

Born, East Haverhill, Massachusetts, 1807, died, Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, 1892. Born of Quaker parents in the humblest circumstances, Whittier lived the life of a typical farm boy, with country and later academy schooling, varied with farming, occupational work, and school-teaching. His life before the Civil War was essentially that of an active anti-slavery reformer, and he suffered personal violence for his opinions. From 1830-1836 he engaged in journalism, beginning with the *Haverhill Gazette*, and ending with the *Pennsylvania Freeman*, and he continued until the war closed an earnest contributor to reform journals. Whittier's poems and collections of poetry date from 1831 to 1892. The collected and revised edition of his works in verse and prose occupies seven volumes.

MEMORIES[1]

A beautiful and happy girl,
With step as light as summer air,
Eyes glad with smiles, and brow of pearl,
Shadowed by many a careless curl
Of unconfined and flowing hair;
A seeming child in everything,
Save thoughtful brow and ripening charms,
As Nature wears the smile of Spring
When sinking into Summer's arms.

A mind rejoicing in the light
Which melted through its graceful bower,
Leaf after leaf, dew-moist and bright,
And stainless in its holy white,
Unfolding like a morning flower:
A heart, which, like a fine-toned lute,
With every breath of feeling woke,
And, even when the tongue was mute,
From eye and lip in music spoke.

How thrills once more the lengthening chain
Of memory, at the thought of thee!
Old hopes which long in dust have lain,
Old dreams, come thronging back again,
And boyhood lives again in me;
I feel its glow upon my cheek,
Its fulness of the heart is mine,
As when I leaned to hear thee speak,
Or raised my doubtful eye to thine.

I hear again thy low replies,
I feel thy arm within my own,
And timidly again uprise
The fringed lids of hazel eyes,
With soft brown tresses overblown.
Ah! memories of sweet summer eves,
Of moonlit wave and willowy way,
Of stars and flowers, and dewy leaves,
And smiles and tones more dear than they!

Ere this, thy quiet eye hath smiled
My picture of thy youth to see,
When, half a woman, half a child,
Thy very artlessness beguiled,
And folly's self seemed wise in thee;
I too can smile, when o'er that hour
The lights of memory backward stream,
Yet feel the while that manhood's power
Is vainer than my boyhood's dream.

Years have passed on, and left their trace
Of graver care and deeper thought;
And unto me the calm, cold face
Of manhood, and to thee the grace
Of woman's pensive beauty brought.
More wide, perchance, for blame than praise,
The schoolboy's humble name has flown;
Thine, in the green and quiet ways
Of unobtrusive goodness known.

And wider yet in thought and deed
Diverge our pathways, one in youth;
Thine the Genevan's[2] sternest creed,
While answers to my spirit's need

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[4] *Psalms* xix. 9.

[1] This poem, as well as *My Playmate* and others is doubtless founded upon the memories are affections of Whittier's youth.

[2] Calvin.

The Derby dalesman's[3] simple truth.
For thee, the priestly rite and prayer,
And holy day, and solemn psalm;
For me, the silent reverence where
My brethren gather, slow and calm.

Yet hath thy spirit left on me
An impress Time has worn not out,
And something of myself in thee,
A shadow from the past, I see,
Lingering, even yet, thy way about;
Not wholly can the heart unlearn
That lesson of its better hours,
Nor yet has Time's dull footstep worn
To common dust that path of flowers.

Thus, while at times before our eyes
The shadows melt, and fall apart,
And, smiling through them, round us lies
The warm light of our morning skies,—
The Indian Summer of the heart!—
In secret sympathies of mind,
In founts of feeling which retain
Their pure, fresh flow, we yet may find
Our early dreams not wholly vain!

1841 1850

PROEM[1]

I love the old melodious lays
Which softly melt the ages through,
The songs of Spenser's golden days,
Arcadian Sidney's[2] silvery phrase,
Sprinkling our noon of time with freshest morning dew.

Yet, vainly in my quiet hours
To breathe their marvelous notes I try;
I feel them, as the leaves and flowers
In silence feel the dewy showers,
And drink with glad, still lips the blessing of the sky.

The rigor of a frozen clime,
The harshness of an untaught ear,
The jarring words of one whose rime
Beat often Labor's hurried time,
Or Duty's rugged march through storm and strife, are here.

Of mystic beauty, dreamy grace,
No rounded art the lack supplies;
Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,
Or softer shades of Nature's face,
I view her common forms with unanointed eyes.

Nor mine the seer-like power to show
The secrets of the heart and mind;
To drop the plummet-line below
Our common world of joy and woe,
A more intense despair or brighter hope to find.

Yet here at least an earnest sense
Of human right and weal is shown;
A hate of tyranny intense,
And hearty in its vehemence,
As if my brother's pain and sorrow were my own.

O Freedom! if to me belong
Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,
Nor Marvell's[3] wit and graceful song,
Still with a love as deep and strong
As theirs, I lay like them, my best gifts on thy shrine!

1847 1849

BARCLAY OF URY[4]

Up the streets of Aberdeen,
By the kirk and college green,
Rode the Laird of Ury;
Close behind him, close beside,
Foul of mouth and evil-eyed,
Pressed the mob in fury.

Flouted him the drunken churl,
Jeered at him the serving-girl,
Prompt to please her master;
And the begging carlin, late
Fed and clothed at Ury's gate,
Cursed him as he passed her.

Yet, with calm and stately mien,
Up the streets of Aberdeen
Came he slowly riding;
And, to all he saw and heard,
Answering not with bitter word,
Turning not for chiding.

Came a troop with broadswords swinging,
Bits and bridles sharply ringing,
Loose and free and froward;
Quoth the foremost, "Ride him down!
Push him! prick him! through the town
Drive the Quaker coward!"

But from out the thickening crowd
Cried a sudden voice and loud:
"Barclay! Ho! a Barclay!"
And the old man at his side
Saw a comrade, battle tried,
Scarred and sunburned darkly;

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[3] The implication is wrong. George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, came from Leicestershire, though some of his hardest experiences as an evangelist took place in Derbyshire.

[1] Written to introduce the first general collection of Whittier's Poems.

[2] The reference is to Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (1590).

[3] Andrew Marvell, 1621-1678, a satirical and lyric Puritan poet.

[4] Barclay, a distinguished Scotch soldier, was one of the earliest converts to Quakerism in Scotland.

Who with ready weapon bare,
Fronting to the troopers there,
Cried aloud: "God save us,
Call ye coward him who stood
Ankle deep in Lützen's[1] blood,
With the brave Gustavus?"

"Nay, I do not need thy sword,
Comrade mine," said Ury's lord;
"Put it up, I pray thee:
Passive to his holy will,
Trust I in my Master still,
Even though he slay me.

"Pledges of thy love and faith,
Proved on many a field of death,
Not by me are needed."
Marveled much that henchman bold,
That his laird, so stout of old,
Now so meekly pleaded.

"Woe's the day!" he sadly said,
With a slowly shaking head,
And a look of pity;
"Ury's honest lord reviled,
Mock of knave and sport of child,
In his own good city!

"Speak the word, and, master mine,
As we charged on Tilly's[2] line,
And his Walloon lancers,
Smiting through their midst we'll teach
Civil look and decent speech
To these boyish prancers!"

"Marvel not, mine ancient friend,
Like beginning, like the end,"
Quoth the Laird of Ury;
"Is the sinful servant more
Than his gracious Lord who bore
Bonds and stripes in Jewry?

"Give me joy that in his name
I can bear, with patient frame,
All these vain ones offer;
While for them he suffereth long,
Shall I answer wrong with wrong,
Scoffing with the scoffer?

"Happier I, with loss of all,
Hunted, outlawed, held in thrall,
With few friends to greet me,
Than when reeve[3] and squire were seen,
Riding out from Aberdeen,
With bared heads to meet me.

"When each goodwife, o'er and o'er,
Blessed me as I passed her door;
And the snooded daughter,
Through her casement glancing down
Smiled on him who bore renown
From red fields of slaughter.

"Hard to feel the stranger's scoff,
Hard the old friend's falling off,
Hard to learn forgiving:
But the Lord his own rewards,
And his love with theirs accords,
Warm and fresh and living.

"Through this dark and stormy night
Faith beholds a feeble light
Up the blackness streaking;
Knowing God's own time is best,
In a patient hope I rest
For the full day-breaking!"

So the Laird of Ury said,
Turning slow his horse's head
Towards the Tolbooth[4] prison,
Where, through iron grates, he heard
Poor disciples of the Word
Preach of Christ arisen!

Not in vain, Confessor old,
Unto us the tale is told
Of thy day of trial;
Every age on him who strays
From its broad and beaten ways
Pours its sevenfold vial.

Happy he whose inward ear
Angel comfortings can hear,
O'er the rabble's laughter;
And, while Hatred's fagots burn,
Glimpses through the smoke discern
Of the good hereafter.

Knowing this, that never yet
Share of Truth was vainly set
In the world's wide fallow;
After hands shall sow the seed,
After hands from hill and mead
Reap the harvests yellow.

Thus, with somewhat of the Seer,
Must the moral pioneer
From the Future borrow;

---

[1] During the Thirty Years' War, Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden, gained a victory in 1632 at Lützen, Prussia, over Wallenstein, the great general of Ferdinand II. emperor of Austria.

[2] Tilly, a Belgian, another of Ferdinand's great generals, had in his army many Walloons—Celtic people of southern Belgium.

[3] An officer of justice.

[4] A prison or jail, particularly the prison at Edinburgh.

Clothe the waste with dreams of grain,
And, on midnight's sky of rain,
Paint the golden morrow!

1847

THE ANGELS OF BUENA VISTA[1]

Speak and tell us, our Ximena,[2] looking northward far away,
O'er the camp of the invaders, o'er the Mexican array,
Who is losing? who is winning? are they far or come they near?
Look abroad, and tell us, sister, whither rolls the storm we hear.

"Down the hills of Angostura[3] still the storm of battle rolls;
Blood is flowing, men are dying; God have mercy on their souls!"
Who is losing? who is winning?—"Over hill and over plain,
I see but smoke of cannon clouding through the mountain rain."

Holy Mother! keep our brothers! Look, Ximena, look once more.
"Still I see the fearful whirlwind rolling darkly as before,
Bearing on, in strange confusion, friend and foeman, foot and horse,
Like some wild and troubled torrent sweeping down its mountain course."

Look forth once more, Ximena! "Ah! the smoke has rolled away;
And I see the Northern rifles gleaming down the ranks of gray.
Hark! that sudden blast of bugles! there the troop of Miñon[4] wheels;
There the Northern horses thunder, with the cannon at their heels.

"Jesu, pity! how it thickens! now retreat and now advance!
Right against the blazing cannon shivers Puebla's charging lance!
Down they go, the brave young riders; horse and foot together fall;
Like a plowshare in the fallow through them plows the Northern ball."

Nearer came the storm and nearer, rolling fast and frightful on:
Speak, Ximena, speak and tell us, who has lost, and who has won?
"Alas! alas! I know not; friend and foe together fall,
O'er the dying rush the living: pray, my sisters, for them all!

"Lo! the wind the smoke is lifting: Blessed Mother, save my brain!
I can see the wounded crawling slowly out from heaps of slain.
Now they stagger, blind and bleeding; now they fall, and strive to rise;
Hasten, sisters, haste and save them, lest they die before our eyes!

"O my heart's love! O my dear one! lay thy poor head on my knee:
Dost thou know the lips that kiss thee? Canst thou hear me? canst thou see?
O my husband, brave and gentle! O my Bernal, look once more
On the blessed cross before thee! Mercy! mercy! all is o'er!"

Dry thy tears, my poor Ximena; lay thy dear one down to rest;
Let his hands be meekly folded, lay the cross upon his breast;
Let his dirge be sung hereafter, and his funeral masses said:
Today, thou poor bereaved one, the living ask thy aid.

Close beside her, faintly moaning, fair and young, a soldier lay,
Torn with shot and pierced with lances, bleeding slow his life away;
But, as tenderly before him, the lorn Ximena knelt,
She saw the Northern eagle shining on his pistol-belt.

With a stifled cry of horror straight she turned away her head;
With a sad and bitter feeling looked she back upon her dead;
But she heard the youth's low moaning, and his struggling breath of pain,
And she raised the cooling water to his parching lips again.

Whispered low the dying soldier, pressed her hand and faintly smiled:
Was that pitying face his mother's? did she watch beside her child?
All his stranger words with meaning her woman's heart supplied;
With her kiss upon his forehead, "Mother!" murmured he, and died!

---

[1] At the battle of Buena Vista, in 1847, during the Mexican War, Mexican women aided the wounded of both armies.
[2] Pronounced Hē-māy-nä.
[3] A range of mountains near Buena Vista.
[4] Miñon was a Mexican general under Santa Anna.

"A bitter curse upon them, poor boy, who led thee forth,
From some gentle, sad-eyed mother, weeping, lonely, in the North!"
Spake the mournful Mexic woman, as she laid him with her dead,
And turned to soothe the living, and bind the wounds which bled.

Look forth once more, Ximena! "Like a cloud before the wind
Rolls the battle down the mountains, leaving blood and death behind;
Ah! they plead in vain for mercy; in the dust the wounded strive;
Hide your faces, holy angels! oh thou Christ of God, forgive!"

Sink, O Night, among thy mountains! let the cool, gray shadows fall;
Dying brothers, fighting demons, drop thy curtain over all!
Through the thickening winter twilight, wide apart the battle rolled,
In its sheath the saber rested, and the cannon's lips grew cold.

But the noble Mexic women still their holy task pursued,
Through that long, dark night of sorrow, worn and faint and lacking food;
Over weak and suffering brothers, with a tender care they hung,
And the dying foeman blessed them in a strange and Northern tongue.

Not wholly lost, O Father! is this evil world of ours;
Upward, through its blood and ashes, spring afresh the Eden flowers;
From its smoking hell of battle, Love and Pity send their prayer,
And still thy white-winged angels hover dimly in our air!

1847

THE POOR VOTER ON ELECTION DAY

The proudest now is but my peer,
The highest not more high;
Today, of all the weary year,
A king of men am I.
Today, alike are great and small,
The nameless and the known;
My palace is the people's hall,
The ballot-box my throne!

Who serves today upon the list
Beside the served shall stand;
Alike the brown and wrinkled fist,
The gloved and dainty hand!
The rich is level with the poor,
The weak is strong today;
And sleekest broadcloth counts no more
Than homespun frock of gray.

Today let pomp and vain pretence
My stubborn right abide;
I set a plain man's common sense
Against the pedant's pride.
Today shall simple manhood try
The strength of gold and land;
The wide world has not wealth to buy
The power in my right hand!

While there's a grief to seek redress,
Or balance to adjust,
Where weighs our living manhood less
Than Mammon's vilest dust,—
While there's a right to need my vote,
A wrong to sweep away,
Up! clouted knee and ragged coat!
A man's a man today![1]

1848

ICHABOD! [2]

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore!
The glory from his gray hairs gone
Forevermore!

Revile him not,—the Tempter hath
A snare for all;
And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall!

Oh, dumb be passion's stormy rage,
When he who might
Have lighted up and led his age,
Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
A bright soul driven,
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,
From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him
Insult him now,

---

[1] Cf. Burns's *Is There for Honest Poverty*, the form of which is similar to that of this poem.

[2] Hebrew, "the glory is departed." See 1 *Samuel* iv. 21. Whittier thus characterizes Webster, whose Seventh of March Speech in 1850 had made the Abolitionists of his time feel that he had compromised his conscience in an endeavor to win the presidency. Modern historians, however, believe him to have been influenced solely by a desire to save the Union. The degree of tenderness, dignity, and strength shown here Whittier does not show elsewhere. Cf. Browning's *The Lost Leader*, written five years before.

Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
Dishonored brow.

But let its humbled sons, instead,
From sea to lake,
A long lament, as for the dead,
In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, naught
Save power remains,—
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
Still strong in chains.

All else is gone; from those great eyes
The soul has fled:
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead!

Then, pay the reverence of old days
To his dead fame;
Walk backward, with averted gaze,
And hide the shame!

1850 1850

BURNS[1]

ON RECEIVING A SPRIG OF HEATHER IN BLOSSOM

No more these simple flowers belong
To Scottish maid and lover;
Sown in the common soil of song,
They bloom the wide world over.

In smiles and tears, in sun and showers,
The minstrel and the heather,
The deathless singer and the flowers
He sang of live together.

Wild heather-bells and Robert Burns!
The moorland flower and peasant!
How, at their mention, memory turns
Her pages old and pleasant!

The gray sky wears again its gold
And purple of adorning,
And manhood's noonday shadows hold
The dews of boyhood's morning.

The dews that washed the dust and soil
From off the wings of pleasure,
The sky, that flecked the ground of toil
With golden threads of leisure.

I call to mind the summer day,
The early harvest mowing,
The sky with sun and clouds at play,
And flowers with breezes blowing.

I hear the blackbird in the corn,
The locust in the haying;
And, like the fabled hunter's horn,
Old tunes my heart is playing.

How oft that day, with fond delay,
I sought the maple's shadow,
And sang with Burns the hours away,
Forgetful of the meadow!

Bees hummed, birds twittered, overhead
I heard the squirrels leaping,
The good dog listened while I read,
And wagged his tail in keeping.

I watched him while in sportive mood
I read *The Twa Dogs'* story,
And half believed he understood
The poet's allegory.

Sweet day, sweet songs! The golden hours
Grew brighter for that singing,
From brook and bird and meadow flowers
A dearer welcome bringing.

New light on home-seen Nature beamed,
New glory over Woman;
And daily life and duty seemed
No longer poor and common.

I woke to find the simple truth
Of fact and feeling better
Than all the dreams that held my youth
A still repining debtor:

That Nature gives her handmaid, Art,
The themes of sweet discoursing;
The tender idyls of the heart
In every tongue rehearsing.

Why dream of lands of gold and pearl,
Of loving knight and lady,
When farmer boy and barefoot girl
Were wandering there already?

I saw through all familiar things
The romance underlying;
The joys and griefs that plume the wings
Of Fancy skyward flying.

I saw the same blithe day return,
The same sweet fall of even,
That rose on wooded Craigie-burn,[2]
And sank on crystal Devon.

I matched with Scotland's heathery hills
The sweet-brier and the clover;

---

[1] The poem is in one of the favorite ballad forms of Burns.

[2] The Craigie Burn (stream), the Devon, Ayr, and Doon are all rivers of Scotland.

With Ayr and Doon, my native rills,
Their wood-hymns chanting over.

O'er rank and pomp, as he had seen,
I saw the Man uprising;
No longer common or unclean,
The child of God's baptizing!

With clearer eyes I saw the worth
Of life among the lowly;
The Bible at his Cotter's hearth[3]
Had made my own more holy.

And if at times an evil strain,
To lawless love appealing,
Broke in upon the sweet refrain
Of pure and healthful feeling,

It died upon the eye and ear,
No inward answer gaining;
No heart had I to see or hear
The discord and the staining.

Let those who never erred forget
His worth, in vain bewailings;
Sweet Soul of Song! I own my debt
Uncanceled by his failings!

Lament who will the ribald line
Which tells his lapse from duty,
How kissed the maddening lips of wine
Or wanton ones of beauty;

But think, while falls that shade between
The erring one and Heaven,
That he who loved like Magdalen,
Like her may be forgiven.

Not his the song whose thunderous chime
Eternal echoes render,—
The mournful Tuscan's[4] haunted rime,
And Milton's starry splendor!

But who his human heart has laid
To Nature's bosom nearer?
Who sweetened toil like him, or paid
To love a tribute dearer?

Through all his tuneful art, how strong[5]
The human feeling gushes!
The very moonlight of his song
Is warm with smiles and blushes!

Give lettered pomp to teeth of Time,
So "Bonnie Doon" but tarry;
Blot out the Epic's stately rime,
But spare his Highland Mary!

1854

MAUD MULLER[1]

Maud Muller on a summer's day
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town,
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest
And a nameless longing filled her breast,—

A wish that she hardly dared to own,
For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade
Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

And ask a draught from the spring that flowed
Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up,
And filled for him her small tin cup,

And blushed as she gave it, looking down
On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

"Thanks!" said the Judge; "a sweeter draught
From a fairer hand was never quaffed."

---

[3] See Burns's *The Cotter's Saturday Night.*

[4] Dante.

[5] Cf. Wordsworth's *At the Grave of Burns* and *Thoughts Suggested The Day Following.*

[1] Whittier wrote regarding this poem: "The poem had no real foundation in fact, though a hint of it may have been found in recalling an incident, trivial in itself, of a journey on the picturesque Maine seaboard with my sister some years before it was written. We had stopped to rest our tired horse under the shade of an apple-tree, and refresh him with water from a little brook which rippled through the stone wall across the road. A very beautiful young girl in scantest summer attire was at work in the hayfield, and as we talked with her we noticed that she strove to hide her bare feet by raking hay over them, blushing as she did so, through the tan of her cheek and neck." Cambridge Ed. of Whittier's Poems, p. 47, The Houghton Mifflin Company.

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,
Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

Then talked of the haying, and wondered whether
The cloud in the west would bring foul weather.

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown
And her graceful ankles bare and brown;

And listened, while a pleased surprise
Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

Maud Muller looked and sighed: "Ah me!
That I the Judge's bride might be!

"He would dress me up in silks so fine,
And praise and toast me at his wine.

"My father should wear a broadcloth coat;
My brother should sail a painted boat.

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,
And the baby should have a new toy each day.

"And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor,
And all should bless me who left our door."

The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill,
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

"And her modest answer and graceful air
Show her wise and good as she is fair.

"Would she were mine, and I today,
Like her, a harvester of hay;

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle and song of birds,
And health and quiet and loving words."

But he thought of his sisters, proud and cold,
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart, the Judge rode on,
And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,
When he hummed in court an old love-tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft in his marble hearth's bright glow,
He watched a picture come and go;

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes
Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside well instead;

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms.

And the proud man sighed, with a secret pain,
"Ah, that I were free again!

"Free as when I rode that day,
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,
And many children played round her door.

But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain,
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

And she heard the little spring brook fall
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again
She saw a rider draw his rein.

And, gazing down with timid grace,
She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls
Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinnet turned,
The tallow candle an astral[2] burned,

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

---

[2] An old-fashioned parlor lamp.

A manly form at her side she saw,
And joy was duty and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,
Saying only, "It might have been."[3]

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,
For rich repiner and household drudge!

God pity them both! and pity us all,
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes;

And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away!

1854

THE BAREFOOT BOY

Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;
From my heart I give thee joy,—
I was once a barefoot boy!
Prince thou art,—the grown-up man
Only is republican.
Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye,—
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools,
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wild-flower's time and place,
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood;
How the tortoise bears his shell,
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well;
How the robin feeds her young,
How the oriole's nest is hung;
Where the whitest lilies blow,
Where the freshest berries grow,
Where the groundnut trails its vine,
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay,
And the architectural plans
Of gray hornet artisans!
For, eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks;
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy,—
Blessings on the barefoot boy!

Oh for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw
Me, their master, waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,
Mine, on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides!
Still as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches too;
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

Oh for festal dainties spread,
Like my bowl of milk and bread,—
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,
On the door-stone, gray and rude!
O'er me, like a regal tent,
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold
Looped in many a wind-swung fold;
While for music came the play
Of the pied frogs' orchestra;
And, to light the noisy choir,
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.
I was monarch: pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh, as boyhood can!
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through

[3] Note the rustic pronunciation of *been* to rime with *again* and below with *pen*. Whittier defended these rimes when they were objected to.

Fresh baptisms of the dew;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:
All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,
Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod,
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless moil:
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

1855 1856

SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE[1]

Of all the rides since the birth of time,
Told in story or sung in rime,—
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,[2]
Or one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass,[3]
Witch astride of a human hack,
Islam's prophet on Al-Borák,[4]—
The strangest ride that ever was sped
Was Ireson's out from Marblehead!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey, head of owl,
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,
Feathered and ruffled in every part,
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.
Scores of women, old and young,
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase
Bacchus round some antique vase,
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns' twang,
Over and over the Mænads[5] sang:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him!—He sailed away
From a leaking ship in Chaleur Bay,—
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,
With his own town's-people on her deck!
"Lay by! lay by!" they called to him.
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!
Brag of your catch of fish again!"
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur
That wreck shall lie forevermore.
Mother and sister, wife and maid,
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead
Over the moaning and rainy sea,—
Looked for the coming that might not be!
What did the winds and the sea-birds say
Of the cruel captain who sailed away?—
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead.

Through the street, on either side,
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,
Hulks of old sailors run aground,
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.
Little the wicked skipper knew
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.
Riding there in his sorry trim,

---

[1] Whittier based this poem on a bit of rime he had heard a schoolmate from Marblehead repeat. He supposed the incident to be a century old, but it was really of 1807. The facts were that Skipper Ireson was blameless, for his men compelled him to leave the sinking crew. He was, however, tarred and feathered. See *History of Marblehead*, by Samuel Roads, Jr., p. 232-234.

[2] Apuleius, a Roman philosopher of the second century, in his *Metamorphoses*, or, as it was popularly termed, *The Golden Ass*, tells the story of a young man who was turned into an ass and met many adventures before regaining human form. The book was heavily drawn upon by the makers of medieval narrative compilations like Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

[3] A calendar or dervish was a begging saint. Whittier is confusing two of the *Arabian Nights* stories, that of the *Royal Mendicants*, who were one-eyed, and that of *The Magic Horse*, which was of brass but which soared into the sky at the rider's will.

[4] Al Boràk (Arabic, the lightning), a winged animal with the face of a man, that carried Mahomet to the seventh heaven.

[5] The frenzied priestesses of Bacchus.

Like an Indian idol glum and grim,
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear
Of voices shouting far and near:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried,—
"What to me is this noisy ride?
What is the shame that clothes the skin
To the nameless horror that lives within?
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!
Hate me and curse me,—I only dread
The hand of God and the face of the dead!"
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea
Said, "God has touched him! why should we?"
Said an old wife mourning her only son,
"Cut the rogue's tether and let him run!"
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,
And gave him a cloak to hide him in,
And left him alone with his shame and sin.
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

1828, 1857 1857

THE PIPES AT LUCKNOW[1]

AN INCIDENT OF THE SEPOY MUTINY

Pipes of the misty moorlands,
Voice of the glens and hills;
The droning of the torrents,
The treble of the rills!
Not the braes of broom and heather,
Nor the mountains dark with rain,
Nor maiden bower, nor border tower,
Have heard your sweetest strain!

Dear to the Lowland reaper,
And plaided mountaineer,—
To the cottage and the castle
The Scottish pipes are dear;—
Sweet sounds the ancient pibroch[2]
O'er mountain, loch, and glade;
But the sweetest of all music
The pipes at Lucknow played.

Day by day the Indian tiger
Louder yelled, and nearer crept;
Round and round the jungle-serpent
Near and nearer circles swept.
"Pray for rescue, wives and mothers,—
Pray today!" the soldier said;
"Tomorrow, death's between us
And the wrong and shame we dread."

Oh, they listened, looked, and waited,
Till their hope became despair;
And the sobs of low bewailing
Filled the pauses of their prayer.
Then up spake a Scottish maiden,
With her ear unto the ground:
"Dinna ye hear it?—dinna ye hear it?
The pipes o' Havelock sound!"

Hushed the wounded man his groaning;
Hushed the wife her little ones;
Alone they heard the drum-roll
And the roar of Sepoy guns.
But to sounds of home and childhood
The Highland ear was true;—
As her mother's cradle-crooning
The mountain pipes she knew.

Like the march of soundless music
Through the vision of the seer,
More of feeling than of hearing,
Of the heart than of the ear,
She knew the droning pibroch,
She knew the Campbell's call:
"Hark! hear ye no MacGregor's,—
The grandest o' them all!"

Oh, they listened, dumb and breathless,
And they caught the sound at last;
Faint and far beyond the Goomtee[3]
Rose and fell the piper's blast!
Then a burst of wild thanksgiving
Mingled woman's voice and man's;
"God be praised!—the march of Havelock!
The piping of the clans!"

Louder, nearer, fierce as vengeance,
Sharp and shrill as swords at strife,
Came the wild MacGregor's clan-call,
Stinging all the air to life.
But when the far-off dust-cloud
To plaided legions grew,
Full tenderly and blithesomely
The pipes of rescue blew!

Round the silver domes of Lucknow,
Moslem mosque and Pagan shrine,
Breathed the air to Britons dearest,
The air of Auld Lang Syne.

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[1] During the Sepoy rebellion in India in 1857, the English had been almost overcome at Lucknow (in northern India) when the Scottish generals Havelock and Campbell, preceded by the music of their bagpipes, came to the rescue.

[2] Highland martial music played on bagpipes.

[3] The Gumti, a river flowing past Lucknow.

O'er the cruel roll of war-drums
Rose that sweet and homelike strain;
And the tartan clove the turban,
As the Goomtee cleaves the plain.

Dear to the corn-land reaper
And plaided mountaineer,—
To the cottage and the castle
The piper's song is dear.
Sweet sounds the Gaelic pibroch
O'er mountain, glen, and glade;
But the sweetest of all music
The pipes at Lucknow played!

1858 1858

TELLING THE BEES

Here is the place; right over the hill
Runs the path I took;
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
And down by the brink
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed-o'errun,
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
Heavy and slow;
And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze;
And the June sun warm
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,
Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care
From my Sunday coat
I brushed off the burrs, and smoothed my hair,
And cooled at the brookside my brow and throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed,—
To love, a year;
Down through the beeches I looked at last
On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

I can see it all now,—the slantwise rain
Of light through the leaves,
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane,
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before,—
The house and the trees,
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door,—
Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,
Forward and back,
Went drearily singing the chore-girl small,
Draping each hive with a shred of black.[1]

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun
Had the chill of snow;
For I knew she was telling the bees of one
Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
For the dead today:
Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill
With his cane to his chin,
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since
In my ear sounds on:—
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

1858 1858

MY PLAYMATE[2]

The pines were dark on Ramoth hill,[3]
Their song was soft and low;
The blossoms in the sweet May wind
Were falling like the snow.

The blossoms drifted at our feet,
The orchard birds sang clear;
The sweetest and the saddest day
It seemed of all the year.

---

[1] "A remarkable custom, brought from the Old Country, formerly prevailed in the rural districts of New England. On the death of a member of the family, the bees were at once informed of the event, and their hives dressed in mourning. This ceremonial was supposed to be necessary to prevent the swarms from leaving their hives and seeking a new home." (Cambridge edition of Whittier, The Houghton Mifflin Company.) The scenery of the poem is that of Whittier's homestead.

[2] See note 11, p. 1559.

[3] A hill about two miles from Whittier's Amesbury home. The neighboring woods of Follymill were "famous for their mayflowers or ground laurel." *Pickard, Life of Whittier,* ii, 427.

For, more to me than birds or flowers,
  My playmate left her home,
And took with her the laughing spring,
  The music and the bloom.

She kissed the lips of kith and kin,
  She laid her hand in mine:
What more could ask the bashful boy
  Who fed her father's kine?

She left us in the bloom of May:
  The constant years told o'er
Their seasons with as sweet May morns,
  But she came back no more.

I walk, with noiseless feet, the round
  Of uneventful years;
Still o'er and o'er I sow the spring
  And reap the autumn ears.

She lives where all the golden year
  Her summer roses blow;
The dusky children of the sun
  Before her come and go.

There haply with her jeweled hands
  She smooths her silken gown,—
No more the homespun lap wherein
  I shook the walnuts down.

The wild grapes wait us by the brook,
  The brown nuts on the hill,
And still the May-day flowers make sweet
  The woods of Follymill.

The lilies blossom in the pond,
  The bird builds in the tree,
The dark pines sing on Ramoth hill
  The slow song of the sea.

I wonder if she thinks of them,
  And how the old time seems,—
If ever the pines of Ramoth wood
  Are sounding in her dreams.

I see her face, I hear her voice.
  Does she remember mine?
And what to her is now the boy
  Who fed her father's kine?

What cares she that the orioles build
  For other eyes than ours,—
That other hands with nuts are filled,
  And other laps with flowers?

O playmate in the golden time!
  Our mossy seat is green,
Its fringing violets blossom yet,
  The old trees o'er it lean.

The winds so sweet with birch and fern
  A sweeter memory blow;
And there in spring the veeries sing
  The song of long ago.

And still the pines of Ramoth wood
  Are moaning like the sea,—
The moaning of the sea of change
  Between myself and thee!

1859-60 1860

SNOW-BOUND[1]

A WINTER IDYL

As the Spirits of Darkness be stronger in the dark, so Good Spirits which be Angels of Light are augmented not only by the Divine light of the Sun, but also by our common Wood Fire: and as the Celestial Fire drives away dark spirits, so also this our Fire of Wood doth the same.—COR. AGRIPPA, *Occult Philosophy*, Book I, ch. v.

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow, and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight: the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river, and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveler stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm.
EMERSON, *The Snow Storm.*

The sun that brief December day
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon.
Slow tracing down the thickening sky
Its mute and ominous prophecy,
A portent seeming less than threat,
It sank from sight before it set.
A chill no coat, however stout,
Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,
A hard, dull bitterness of cold,
  That checked, mid-vein, the circling race
  Of life-blood in the sharpened face,
The coming of the snow-storm told.
The wind blew east: we heard the roar
Of Ocean on his wintry shore,
And felt the strong pulse throbbing there
Beat with low rhythm our inland air.

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores,—
Brought in the wood from out of doors,
Littered the stalls, and from the mows
Raked down the herd's-grass for the cows;
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn;
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,

---

[1] In this poem, which pictures his own boyhood home, Whittier gives poetic warmth and significance to the homely details of the New England farm-life of the early nineteenth century. For the other side of the picture, see the prelude to *Among the Hills*. For contemporary treatment of the New England country, see Robert Frost's *North of Boston*, etc.

Impatient down the stanchion rows
The cattle shake their walnut bows;
While, peering from his early perch
Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,
The cock his crested helmet bent
And down his querulous challenge sent.

Unwarmed by any sunset light
The gray day darkened into night,
A night made hoary with the swarm
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,
As zigzag wavering to and fro,
Crossed and recrossed the winged snow:
And ere the early bedtime came
The white drift piled the window-frame,
And through the glass the clothes-line posts
Looked in like tall and sheeted ghosts.

So all night long the storm roared on:
The morning broke without a sun;
In tiny spherule traced with lines
Of Nature's geometric signs,
In starry flake and pellicle,
All day the hoary meteor fell;
And, when the second morning shone,
We looked upon a world unknown,
On nothing we could call our own.
Around the glistening wonder bent
The blue walls of the firmament,
No cloud above, no earth below,—
A universe of sky and snow!
The old familiar sights of ours
Took marvelous shapes; strange domes and towers
Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
Or garden-wall, or belt of wood;
A smooth white mound the brush-pile showed,
A fenceless drift what once was road;
The bridle-post an old man sat
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;
The well-curb had a Chinese roof;
And even the long sweep, high aloof,
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

A prompt, decisive man, no breath
Our father wasted: "Boys, a path!"
Well pleased, (for when did farmer boy
Count such a summons less than joy?)
Our buskins on our feet we drew;
With mittened hands, and caps drawn low,
To guard our necks and ears from snow,
We cut the solid whiteness through.
And, where the drift was deepest, made
A tunnel walled and overlaid
With dazzling crystal: we had read
Of rare Aladdin's wondrous cave,
And to our own his name we gave,
With many a wish the luck were ours
To test his lamp's supernal powers.
We reached the barn with merry din,
And roused the prisoned brutes within.
The old horse thrust his long head out,
And grave with wonder gazed about;
The cock his lusty greeting said,
And forth his speckled harem led;
The oxen lashed their tails, and hooked,
And mild reproach of hunger looked;
The hornéd patriarch of the sheep,
Like Egypt's Amun[2] roused from sleep,
Shook his sage head with gesture mute,
And emphasized with stamp of foot.

All day the gusty north-wind bore
The loosening drift its breath before;
Low circling round its southern zone,
The sun through dazzling snow-mist shone.
No church-bell lent its Christian tone
To the savage air, no social smoke
Curled over woods of snow-hung oak.
A solitude made more intense
By dreary-voicéd elements,
The shrieking of the mindless wind,
The moaning tree-boughs swaying blind,
And on the glass the unmeaning beat
Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet.
Beyond the circle of our hearth
No welcome sound of toil or mirth
Unbound the spell, and testified
Of human life and thought outside.
We minded that the sharpest ear
The buried brooklet could not hear,
The music of whose liquid lip
Had been to us companionship,
And, in our lonely life, had grown
To have an almost human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,
The sun, a snow-blown traveler, sank
From sight beneath the smothering bank,
We piled with care our nightly stack
Of wood against the chimney-back,—
The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,
And on its top the stout backstick;
The knotty forestick laid apart,
And filled between with curious art
The ragged brush; then, hovering near,
We watched the first red blaze appear,
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam
On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,
Until the old, rude-furnished room
Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;
While radiant with a mimic flame

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[2] One of the chief deities of ancient Egypt, usually represented as a ram with great horns.

Outside the sparkling drift became,
And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree
Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.
The crane and pendent trammels showed,
The Turks' heads on the andirons glowed;
While childish fancy, prompt to tell
The meaning of the miracle,
Whispered the old rime: *"Under the tree*
When fire outdoors burns merrily,
There the witches are making tea."

The moon above the eastern wood
Shone at its full; the hill-range stood
Transfigured in the silver flood,
Its blown snows flashing cold and keen,
Dead white, save where some sharp ravine
Took shadow, or the somber green
Of hemlocks turned to pitchy black
Against the whiteness at their back.
For such a world and such a night
Most fitting that unwarming light,
Which only seemed where'er it fell
To make the coldness visible.

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north-wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost-line back with tropic heat;
And ever, when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney laughed;
The house-dog on his paws outspread
Laid to the fire his drowsy head,
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall
A couchant tiger's seemed to fall;
And, for the winter fireside meet,
Between the andirons' straddling feet,
The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And, close at hand, the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood.

What matter how the night behaved?
What matter how the north-wind raved?
Blow high, blow low, not all its snow
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.
O Time and Change!—with hair as gray
As was my sire's that winter day,
How strange it seems, with so much gone
Of life and love, to still live on!
Ah, brother! only I and thou
Are left of all that circle now,—
The dear home faces whereupon
That fitful firelight paled and shone.
Henceforward, listen as we will,
The voices of that hearth are still;
Look where we may, the wide earth o'er,
Those lighted faces smile no more.
We tread the paths their feet have worn,
We sit beneath their orchard-trees,
We hear, like them, the hum of bees
And rustle of the bladed corn;
We turn the pages that they read,
Their written words we linger o'er,
But in the sun they cast no shade,
No voice is heard, no sign is made,
No step is on the conscious floor!
Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust,
(Since He who knows our need is just,)
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress-trees![3]
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own!

We sped the time with stories old,
Wrought puzzles out, and riddles told,
Or stammered from our school-book lore
"The chief of Gambia's golden shore."[4]
How often since, when all the land
Was clay in Slavery's shaping hand,
As if a trumpet called, I've heard,
Dame Mercy Warren's rousing word:
"Does not the voice of reason cry,
Claim the first right which Nature gave,
From the red scourge of bondage fly,
Nor deign to live a burdened slave!"
Our father rode again his ride
On Memphremagog's[5] wooded side;
Sat down again to moose and samp
In trapper's hut and Indian camp;
Lived o'er the old idyllic ease
Beneath St. François' hemlock trees;
Again for him the moonlight shone
On Norman cap and bodiced zone;[6]
Again he heard the violin play
Which led the village dance away,
And mingled in its merry whirl
The grandam and the laughing girl.
Or, nearer home, our steps he led
Where Salisbury's[7] level marshes spread

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[3] The cypress tree is a symbol of mourning.

[4] *The African Chief*, a poem in *The American Preceptor*, edited by Caleb Bingham. Mercy Otis Warren (mentioned below), 1728-1814, a daughter of James Otis the elder, was a dramatist and a historian.

[5] A lake in Vermont and Quebec. Samp, in the next line, is a kind of hominy.

[6] Whittier's father had made trading trips into Canada, where he had seen French girls in Norman cap and bodice.

[7] A town in Massachusetts.

Mile-wide as flies the laden bee;
Where merry mowers, hale and strong,
Swept, scythe on scythe, their swaths along
The low green prairies of the sea.
We shared the fishing off Boar's Head,[8]
And round the rocky Isles of Shoals[8]
The hake-broil on the driftwood coals;
The chowder on the sand-beach made,
Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot,
With spoons of clam-shell from the pot.
We heard the tales of witchcraft old,
And dream and sign and marvel told
To sleepy listeners as they lay
Stretched idly on the salted hay
Adrift along the winding shores,
When favoring breezes deigned to blow
The square sail of the gundalow,
And idle lay the useless oars.

Our mother, while she turned her wheel
Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,
Told how the Indian hordes came down
At midnight on Cocheco town,[9]
And how her own great-uncle bore
His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.
Recalling, in her fitting phrase,
So rich and picturesque and free,
(The common unrimed poetry
Of simple life and country ways)
The story of her early days,—
She made us welcome to her home;
Old hearths grew wide to give us room;
We stole with her a frightened look
At the gray wizard's conjuring-book,
The fame whereof went far and wide
Through all the simple country-side;
We heard the hawks at twilight play,
The boat-horn on Piscataqua,[10]
The loon's weird laughter far away;
We fished her little trout-brook, knew
What flowers in wood and meadow grew,
What sunny hillsides autumn-brown
She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down,
Saw where in sheltered cove and bay
The ducks' black squadron anchored lay,
And heard the wild-geese calling loud
Beneath the gray November cloud.

Then, haply, with a look more grave,
And soberer tone, some tale she gave
From painful Sewel's[11] ancient tome,
Beloved in every Quaker home,
Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom,
Or Chalkley's[12] Journal, old and quaint,—
Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint!—
Who, when the dreary calms prevailed,
And water-butt and bread-cask failed,
And cruel, hungry eyes pursued
His portly presence, mad for food,
With dark hints muttered under breath
Of casting lots for life or death,
Offered, if Heaven withheld supplies,
To be himself the sacrifice.
Then, suddenly, as if to save
The good man from his living grave,
A ripple on the water grew,
A school of porpoise flashed in view.
"Take, eat," he said, "and be content;
These fishes in my stead are sent
By Him who gave the tangled ram
To spare the child of Abraham."

Our uncle, innocent of books,
Was rich in lore of fields and brooks,
The ancient teachers never dumb
Of Nature's unhoused lyceum.
In moons and tides and weather wise,
He read the clouds as prophecies,
And foul or fair could well divine,
By many an occult hint and sign,
Holding the cunning-warded keys
To all the woodcraft mysteries;
Himself to Nature's heart so near
That all her voices in his ear
Of beast or bird had meanings clear,
Like Apollonius[13] of old,
Who knew the tales the sparrows told,
Or Hermes,[14] who interpreted
What the sage cranes of Nilus said;
A simple, guileless, childlike man,
Content to live where life began;
Strong only on his native grounds,
The little world of sights and sounds
Whose girdle was the parish bounds,
Whereof his fondly partial pride
The common features magnified,
As Surrey hills to mountains grew
In White[15] of Selborne's loving view,—
He told how teal and loon he shot,
And how the eagle's eggs he got,
The feats on pond and river done,
The prodigies of rod and gun;
Till, warming with the tales he told,
Forgotten was the outside cold,

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[8] On the New Hampshire coast.
[9] Dover, New Hampshire.
[10] Note the rustic pronunciation of this rime.
[11] William Sewel, 1654-1720, a Quaker. See note 37, p. 104.
[12] An English Quaker preacher, 1675-1741.
[13] A Greek philosopher and reputed magician, 4 B. C.-97 A. D.
[14] Hermes Trismegistus, thrice greatest, the Greek name of the Egyptian god Thoth, reputed writer of much scientific and magic lore.
[15] Gilbert White, 1720-1793, whose careful description, in *The Natural History of Selborne*, of natural objects about his home in the parish of Selborne, in Hampshire, England, has made his work a classic.

The bitter wind unheeded blew,
From ripening corn the pigeons flew,
The partridge drummed i' the wood, the mink
Went fishing down the river-brink.
In fields with bean or clover gay,
The woodchuck, like a hermit gray,
Peered from the doorway of his cell;
The muskrat plied the mason's trade,
And tier by tier his mud-walls laid;
And from the shagbark overhead
The grizzled squirrel dropped his shell.

Next, the dear aunt, whose smile of cheer
And voice in dreams I see and hear,—
The sweetest woman ever Fate
Perverse denied a household mate,
Who, lonely, homeless, not the less
Found peace in love's unselfishness,
And welcome whereso'er she went,
A calm and gracious element,
Whose presence seemed the sweet income
And womanly atmosphere of home,—
Called up her girlhood memories,
The huskings and the apple-bees,
The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,
Weaving through all the poor details
And homespun warp of circumstance
A golden woof-thread of romance.
For well she kept her genial mood
And simple faith of maidenhood;
Before her still a cloud-land lay,
The mirage loomed across her way;
The morning dew, that dries so soon
With others, glistened at her noon;
Through years of toil and soil and care,
From glossy tress to thin gray hair,
All unprofaned she held apart
The virgin fancies of the heart.
Be shame to him of woman born
Who hath for such but thought of scorn.

There, too, our elder sister plied
Her evening task the stand beside;
A full, rich nature, free to trust,
Truthful and almost sternly just,
Impulsive, earnest, prompt to act,
And make her generous thought a fact,
Keeping with many a light disguise
The secret of self-sacrifice.
O heart sore-tried! thou hast the best
That Heaven itself could give thee,—rest,
Rest from all bitter thoughts and things!
How many a poor one's blessing went
With thee beneath the low green tent
Whose curtain never outward swings!

As one who held herself a part
Of all she saw, and let her heart
Against the household bosom lean,
Upon the motley-braided mat
Our youngest and our dearest[16] sat,
Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,
Now bathed within the fadeless green
And holy peace of Paradise.
Oh, looking from some heavenly hill,
Or from the shade of saintly palms,
Or silver reach of river calms,
Do those large eyes behold me still?
With me one little year ago:—
The chill weight of the winter snow
For months upon her grave has lain;
And now, when summer south-winds blow
And brier and harebell bloom again,
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
I see the violet-sprinkled sod
Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak
The hillside flowers she loved to seek,
Yet following me where'er I went
With dark eyes full of love's content.
The birds are glad; the brier-rose fills
The air with sweetness; all the hills
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky;
But still I wait with ear and eye
For something gone which should be nigh,
A loss in all familiar things,
In flower that blooms, and bird that sings.
And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,
Am I not richer than of old?
Safe in thy immortality,
What change can reach the wealth I hold?
What chance can mar the pearl and gold
Thy love hath left in trust with me?
And while in life's late afternoon,
Where cool and long the shadows grow,
I walk to meet the night that soon
Shall shape and shadow overflow,
I cannot feel that thou art far,
Since near at need the angels are;
And when the sunset gates unbar,
Shall I not see thee waiting stand,
And, white against the evening star,
The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

Brisk wielder of the birch and rule,
The master of the district school
Held at the fire his favored place,
Its warm glow lit a laughing face
Fresh-hued and fair, where scarce appeared
The uncertain prophecy of beard.
He teased the mitten-blinded cat,
Played cross-pins on my uncle's hat,
Sang songs, and told us what befalls
In classic Dartmouth's college halls.

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[16] Elizabeth, Whittier's much beloved younger sister.

Born the wild Northern hills among,
From whence his yeoman father wrung
By patient toil subsistence scant,
Not competence and yet not want,
He early gained the power to pay
His cheerful, self-reliant way;
Could doff at ease his scholar's gown
To peddle wares from town to town;
Or through the long vacation's reach
In lonely lowland districts teach,
Where all the droll experience found
At stranger hearths in boarding round,
The moonlit skater's keen delight,
The sleigh-drive through the frosty night,
The rustic party, with its rough
Accompaniment of blind-man's-buff,
And whirling plate, and forfeits paid,
His winter task a pastime made.
Happy the snow-locked homes wherein
He tuned his merry violin,
Or played the athlete in the barn,
Or held the good dame's winding yarn,
Or mirth-provoking versions told
Of classic legends rare and old,
Wherein the scenes of Greece and Rome
Had all the commonplace of home,
And little seemed at best the odds
'Twixt Yankee pedlers and old gods;
Where Pindus-born Araxes[17] took
The guise of any grist-mill brook,
And dread Olympus at his will
Became a huckleberry hill.

A careless boy that night he seemed;
But at his desk he had the look
And air of one who wisely schemed,
And hostage from the future took
In trained thought and lore of book.
Large-brained, clear-eyed,—of such as he
Shall Freedom's young apostles be,
Who, following in War's bloody trail,
Shall every lingering wrong assail;
All chains from limb and spirit strike,
Uplift the black and white alike;
Scatter before their swift advance
The darkness and the ignorance,
The pride, the lust, the squalid sloth,
Which nurtured Treason's monstrous growth,
Made murder pastime, and the hell
Of prison-torture possible;
The cruel lie of caste refute,
Old forms remold, and substitute
For Slavery's lash the freeman's will,
For blind routine, wise-handed skill;
A school-house plant on every hill,
Stretching in radiate nerve-lines thence
The quick wires of intelligence;
Till North and South together brought
Shall own the same electric thought,
In peace a common flag salute,
And, side by side in labor's free
And unresentful rivalry,
Harvest the fields wherein they fought.

Another guest[18] that winter night
Flashed back from lustrous eyes the light.
Unmarked by time, and yet not young,
The honeyed music of her tongue
And words of meekness scarcely told
A nature passionate and bold,
Strong, self-concentered, spurning guide,
Its milder features dwarfed beside
Her unbent will's majestic pride.
She sat among us, at the best,
A not unfeared, half-welcome guest,
Rebuking with her cultured phrase
Our homeliness of words and ways.
A certain pard-like, treacherous grace
Swayed the lithe limbs and drooped the lash,
Lent the white teeth their dazzling flash;
And under low brows, black with night,
Rayed out at times a dangerous light;
The sharp heat-lightnings of her face
Presaging ill to him whom Fate
Condemned to share her love or hate.
A woman tropical, intense
In thought and act, in soul and sense,
She blended in a like degree
The vixen and the devotee,
Revealing with each freak or feint
The temper of Petruchio's Kate,[19]
The raptures of Siena's saint.[20]

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[17] A river which flows down from the Pindus mountains in Greece. Mt. Olympus was the home of the gods.

[18] Whittier's own explanatory note is interesting: "The not unfeared, half unwelcome guest, was Harriet Livermore, daughter of Judge Livermore, of New Hampshire, a young woman of fine natural ability, enthusiastic, eccentric, with slight control over her violent temper, which sometimes made her religious profession doubtful. She was equally ready to exhort in schoolhouse, prayer-meeting and dance in a Washington ballroom while her father was a member of Congress. She early embraced the doctrine of the Second Advent and felt it her duty to proclaim the Lord's speedy coming. With this message she crossed the Atlantic and spent the greater part of a long life in traveling over Europe and Asia. She lived some time with Lady Hester Stanhope, a woman as fantastic and mentally strained as herself, on the slope of Mt. Lebanon, but finally quarreled with her. . . A friend of mine found her, when quite an old woman, wandering in Syria with a tribe of Arabs, who, with the Oriental notion that madness is inspiration, accepted her as their prophetess and leader. At the time referred to in *Snowbound* she was boarding at the Rocks Village, about two miles from us." *Riverside Classics* edition of Whittier's poems, p. ix.

[19] Shakspere's *The Taming of the Shrew.*

[20] Saint Catherine of Siena, a famous saint, experienced many trances and visions.

Her tapering hand and rounded wrist
Had facile power to form a fist;
The warm, dark languish of her eyes
Was never safe from wrath's surprise.
Brows saintly calm and lips devout
Knew every change of scowl and pout;
And the sweet voice had notes more high
And shrill for social battle-cry.

Since then what old cathedral town
Has missed her pilgrim staff and gown,
What convent-gate has held its lock
Against the challenge of her knock!
Through Smyrna's plague-hushed thoroughfares,
Up sea-set Malta's rocky stairs,
Gray olive slopes of hills that hem
Thy tombs and shrines, Jerusalem,
Or startling on her desert throne
The crazy Queen of Lebanon
With claims fantastic as her own,
Her tireless feet have held their way;
And still, unrestful, bowed, and gray,
She watches under Eastern skies,
With hope each day renewed and fresh,
The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,
Whereof she dreams and prophesies!

Where'er her troubled path may be,
The Lord's sweet pity with her go!
The outward wayward life we see,
The hidden springs we may not know.
Nor is it given us to discern
What threads the fatal sisters spun,
Through what ancestral years has run
The sorrow with the woman born,
What forged her cruel chain of moods,
What set her feet in solitudes,
And held the love within her mute,
What mingled madness in the blood,
A life-long discord and annoy,
Water of tears with oil of joy,
And hid within the folded bud
Perversities of flower and fruit.
It is not ours to separate
The tangled skein of will and fate,
To show what metes and bounds should stand
Upon the soul's debatable land,
And between choice and Providence
Divide the circle of events;
But He who knows our frame is just,
Merciful and compassionate,
And full of sweet assurances
And hope for all the language is,
That He remembereth we are dust!

At last the great logs, crumbling low,
Sent out a dull and duller glow,
The bull's-eye watch that hung in view,
Ticking its weary circuit through,
Pointed with mutely-warning sign
Its black hand to the hour of nine.
That sign the pleasant circle broke:
My uncle ceased his pipe to smoke,
Knocked from its bowl the refuse gray
And laid it tenderly away,
Then roused himself to safely cover
The dull red brands with ashes over.
And while, with care, our mother laid
The work aside, her steps she stayed
One moment, seeking to express
Her grateful sense of happiness
For food and shelter, warmth and health,
And love's contentment more than wealth,
With simple wishes (not the weak,
Vain prayers which no fulfilment seek,
But such as warm the generous heart,
O'er-prompt to do with Heaven its part)
That none might lack, that bitter night,
For bread and clothing, warmth and light.

Within our beds awhile we heard
The wind that round the gables roared,
With now and then a ruder shock,
Which made our very bedsteads rock.
We heard the loosened clapboards tost,
The board-nails snapping in the frost;
And on us, through the unplastered wall,
Felt the light-sifted snow-flakes fall;
But sleep stole on, as sleep will do
When hearts are light and life is new;
Faint and more faint the murmurs grew,
Till in the summer-land of dreams
They softened to the sound of streams,
Low stir of leaves, and dip of oars,
And lapsing waves on quiet shores.

Next morn we wakened with the shout
Of merry voices high and clear;
And saw the teamsters drawing near
To break the drifted highways out.
Down the long hillside treading slow
We saw the half-buried oxen go,
Shaking the snow from heads uptost,
Their straining nostrils white with frost.
Before our door the straggling train
Drew up, an added team to gain.
The elders threshed their hands a-cold,
Passed, with the cider-mug, their jokes
From lip to lip; the younger folks
Down the loose snow-banks, wrestling, rolled,
Then toiled again the cavalcade
O'er windy hill, through clogged ravine,
And woodland paths that wound between
Low drooping pine-boughs winter-weighed.
From every barn a team afoot,

At every house a new recruit,
Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,
Haply the watchful young men saw
Sweet doorway pictures of the curls
And curious eyes of merry girls,
Lifting their hands in mock defense
Against the snow-ball's compliments,
And reading in each missive tost
The charm with Eden never lost.

We heard once more the sleigh-bells' sound;
And, following where the teamsters led,
The wise old Doctor went his round,
Just pausing at our door to say,
In the brief autocratic way
Of one who, prompt at Duty's call,
Was free to urge her claim on all,
That some poor neighbor sick abed
At night our mother's aid would need.
For, one in generous thought and deed,
What mattered in the sufferer's sight
The Quaker matron's inward light,
The Doctor's mail of Calvin's creed?
All hearts confess the saints elect
Who, twain in faith, in love agree,
And melt not in an acid sect
The Christian pearl of charity!

So days went on: a week had passed
Since the great world was heard from last.
The almanac we studied o'er,
Read and reread our little store
Of books and pamphlets, scarce a score;
One harmless novel, mostly hid
From younger eyes, a book forbid,
And poetry, (or good or bad,
A single book was all we had,)
Where Ellwood's[21] meek, drab-skirted Muse,
A stranger to the heathen Nine,
Sang, with a somewhat nasal whine,
The wars of David and the Jews.
At last the floundering carrier bore
The village paper to our door.
Lo! broadening outward as we read,
To warmer zones the horizon spread;
In panoramic length unrolled
We saw the marvels that it told.
Before us passed the painted Creeks,[22]
And daft McGregor on his raids
In Costa Rica's everglades.
And up Taygetos winding slow
Rode Ypsilanti's Mainote Greeks,
A Turk's head at each saddle bow!
Welcome to us its week-old news,
Its corner for the rustic Muse,
Its monthly gauge of snow and rain,
Its record, mingling in a breath
The wedding bell and dirge of death;
Jest, anecdote, and love-lorn tale,
The latest culprit sent to jail;
Its hue and cry of stolen and lost,
Its vendue sales and goods at cost,
And traffic calling loud for gain.
We felt the stir of hall and street,
The pulse of life that round us beat;
The chill embargo of the snow
Was melted in the genial glow;
Wide swung again our ice-locked door,
And all the world was ours once more!

Clasp, Angel of the backward look
And folded wings of ashen gray
And voice of echoes far away,
The brazen covers of thy book;
The weird palimpsest[23] old and vast,
Wherein thou hid'st the spectral past;
Where, closely mingling, pale and glow
The characters of joy and woe;
The monographs of outlived years,
Or smile-illumed or dim with tears,
Green hills of life that slope to death,
And haunts of home, whose vistaed trees
Shade off to mournful cypresses
With the white amaranths[24] underneath.
Even while I look, I can but heed
The restless sands' incessant fall,
Importunate hours that hours succeed,
Each clamorous with its own sharp need,
And duty keeping pace with all.
Shut down and clasp the heavy lids;
I hear again the voice that bids
The dreamer leave his dream midway
For larger hopes and graver fears:
Life greatens in these later years,
The century's aloe flowers today!

Yet, haply, in some lull of life,
Some Truce of God[25] which breaks its strife
The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,
Dreaming in throngful city ways
Of winter joys his boyhood knew;

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[21] Thomas Ellwood, an English Quaker, 1639-1713, and a friend of Milton's, wrote a long poem in five books about the life of King David, which, as Whittier intimates, was not inspired by the Greek Muses.

[22] They read of the war with the Seminole or Creek Indians in Georgia, 1817-18; of the Scotch Sir Gregor McGregor, who tried to establish a colony in Costa Rica; of Ypsilanti, a Greek, who in the war for Greek independence, gathered his cavalrymen from the province of Maina, near Mt. Taygetus, a locality inhabited by robbers and pirates.

[23] A parchment from which one writing has been erased to make room for another.

[24] An immortal flower.

[25] In medieval times a cessation of private hostilities from Thursday evening to Monday morning for the celebration of church festivals.

And dear and early friends—the few
Who yet remain—shall pause to view
These Flemish pictures[26] of old days;
Sit with me by the homestead hearth,
And stretch the hands of memory forth
To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze!
And thanks untraced to lips unknown
Shall greet me like the odors blown
From unseen meadows newly mown,
Or lilies floating in some pond,
Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;
The traveler owns the grateful sense
Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,
And, pausing, takes with forehead bare
The benediction of the air.

1865 1866

THE ETERNAL GOODNESS

O friends! with whom my feet have trod
The quiet aisles of prayer,
Glad witness to your zeal for God
And love of man I bear.

I trace your lines of argument;
Your logic linked and strong
I weigh as one who dreads dissent,
And fears a doubt as wrong.

But still my human hands are weak
To hold your iron creeds;
Against the words ye bid me speak
My heart within me pleads.

Who fathoms the Eternal Thought?
Who talks of scheme and plan?
The Lord is God! He needeth not
The poor device of man.

I walk with bare, hushed feet the ground
Ye tread with boldness shod;
I dare not fix with mete and bound
The love and power of God.

Ye praise his justice; even such
His pitying love I deem:
Ye seek a king; I fain would touch
The robe that hath no seam.

Ye see the curse which overbroods
A world of pain and loss;
I hear our Lord's beatitudes
And prayer upon the cross.

More than your schoolmen teach, within
Myself, alas! I know:
Too dark ye cannot paint the sin,
Too small the merit show.

I bow my forehead to the dust,
I veil mine eyes for shame,
And urge, in trembling self-distrust,
A prayer without a claim.

I see the wrong that round me lies,
I feel the guilt within;
I hear, with groan and travail-cries,
The world confess its sin.

Yet, in the maddening maze of things,
And tossed by storm and flood,
To one fixed trust my spirit clings;
I know that God is good!

Not mine to look where cherubim
And seraphs may not see,
But nothing can be good in him
Which evil is in me.

The wrong that pains my soul below
I dare not throne above,
I know not of his hate,—I know
His goodness and his love.

I dimly guess from blessings known
Of greater out of sight,
And, with the chastened Psalmist, own
His judgments too are right.[1]

I long for household voices gone,
For vanished smiles I long,
But God hath led my dear ones on,
And he can do no wrong.

I know not what the future hath
Of marvel or surprise,
Assured alone that life and death
His mercy underlies.

And if my heart and flesh are weak
To bear an untried pain,
The bruised reed he will not break,
But strengthen and sustain.

No offering of my own I have,
Nor works my faith to prove;
I can but give the gifts he gave,
And plead his love for love.

And so beside the Silent Sea
I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.

I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;

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[26] The Flemish painters of the fifteenth century were among the first to aim to depict homely, domestic life.

[1] Cf. David, *Psalms* xix. 9.

I only know I cannot drift
  Beyond his love and care.

O brothers! if my faith is vain,
  If hopes like these betray,
Pray for me that my feet may gain
  The sure and safer way.

And Thou, O Lord! by whom are seen
  Thy creatures as they be,
Forgive me if too close I lean
  My human heart on thee!

1865 1867

From AMONG THE HILLS

PRELUDE

Along the roadside, like the flowers of gold
That tawny Incas for their gardens wrought,[1]
Heavy with sunshine droops the golden-rod,
And the red pennons of the cardinal-flowers
Hang motionless upon their upright staves.
The sky is hot and hazy, and the wind,
Wing-weary with its long flight from the south,
Unfelt; yet, closely scanned, yon maple leaf
With faintest motion, as one stirs in dreams,
Confesses it. The locust by the wall
Stabs the noon-silence with his sharp alarm.
A single hay-cart down the dusty road
Creaks slowly, with its driver fast asleep
On the load's top. Against the neighboring hill,
Huddled along the stone wall's shady side,
The sheep show white, as if a snowdrift still
Defied the dog-star. Through the open door
A drowsy smell of flowers—gray heliotrope,
And white sweet clover, and shy mignonette—
Comes faintly in, and silent chorus lends
To the pervading symphony of peace.

No time is this for hands long over-worn
To task their strength: and (unto Him be praise
Who giveth quietness!) the stress and strain
Of years that did the work of centuries
Have ceased, and we can draw our breath once more
Freely and full.[2] So, as yon harvesters
Make glad their nooning underneath the elms
With tale and riddle and old snatch of song,
I lay aside grave themes, and idly turn
The leaves of memory's sketch-book, dreaming o'er
Old summer pictures of the quiet hills,
And human life, as quiet, at their feet.

And yet not idly all. A farmer's son,
Proud of field-lore and harvest craft, and feeling
All their fine possibilities, how rich
And restful even poverty and toil
Become when beauty, harmony, and love
Sit at their humble hearth as angels sat
At evening in the patriarch's tent, when man
Makes labor noble, and his farmer's frock
The symbol of a Christian chivalry,
Tender and just and generous to her
Who clothes with grace all duty; still, I know
Too well the picture has another side.
How wearily the grind of toil goes on
Where love is wanting, how the eye and ear
And heart are starved amidst the plenitude
Of nature, and how hard and colorless
Is life without an atmosphere. I look
Across the lapse of half a century,
And call to mind old homesteads, where no flower
Told that the spring had come, but evil weeds,
Nightshade and rough-leaved burdock, in the place
Of the sweet doorway greeting of the rose
And honeysuckle, where the house walls seemed
Blistering in sun, without a tree or vine
To cast the tremulous shadow of its leaves
Across the curtainless windows from whose panes
Fluttered the signal rags of shiftlessness.[3]
Within, the cluttered kitchen floor, unwashed
(Broom-clean I think they called it); the best room

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[1] The Incas of Peru, an aboriginal tribe unusually advanced in civilization, displayed great skill as workers of metals.

[2] This poem was written in 1868 soon after the close of the Civil War.

[3] Whittier's stern realism is not exaggeration either for his own day or ours.

Stifling with cellar damp, shut from the air
In hot midsummer, bookless, pictureless
Save the inevitable sampler hung
Over the fireplace, or a mourning piece,
A green-haired woman, peony-cheeked, beneath
Impossible willows; the wide-throated hearth
Bristling with faded pine-boughs half concealing
The piled-up rubbish at the chimney's back;
And, in sad keeping with all things about them,
Shrill, querulous women, sour and sullen men,
Untidy, loveless, old before their time,
With scarce a human interest save their own
Monotonous round of small economies,
Or the poor scandal of the neighborhood;
Blind to the beauty everywhere revealed,
Treading the May-flowers with regardless feet;
For them the song-sparrow and the bobolink
Sang not, nor winds made music in the leaves;
For them in vain October's holocaust
Burned, gold and crimson, over all the hills,
The sacramental mystery of the woods.
Church-goers, fearful of the unseen Powers,
But grumbling over pulpit-tax and pew-rent,
Saving, as shrewd economists, their souls
And winter pork with the least possible outlay
Of salt and sanctity; in daily life
Showing as little actual comprehension
Of Christian charity and love and duty,
As if the Sermon on the Mount had been
Outdated like a last year's almanac:
Rich in broad woodlands and in half-tilled fields,
And yet so pinched and bare and comfortless,
The veriest straggler limping on his rounds,
The sun and air his sole inheritance,
Laughed at a poverty that paid its taxes,
And hugged his rags in self-complacency!

Not such should be the homesteads of a land
Where whoso wisely wills and acts may dwell
As king and lawgiver, in broad-acred state,
With beauty, art, taste, culture, books, to make
His hour of leisure richer than a life
Of fourscore to the barons of old time;
Our yeoman should be equal to his home,
Set in the fair, green valleys, purple walled,
A man to match his mountains, not to creep
Dwarfed and abased below them. I would fain
In this light way (of which I needs must own
With the knife-grinder of whom Canning sings,
"Story, God bless you! I have none to tell you!")[4]
Invite the eye to see and heart to feel
The beauty and the joy within their reach,—
Home, and home loves, and the beatitudes
Of nature free to all. Haply in years
That wait to take the places of our own,
Heard where some breezy balcony looks down
On happy homes, or where the lake in the moon
Sleeps dreaming of the mountains, fair as Ruth,
In the old Hebrew pastoral, at the feet
Of Boaz, even this simple lay of mine
May seem the burden of a prophecy,
Finding its late fulfilment in a change
Slow as the oak's growth, lifting manhood up
Through broader culture, finer manners, love,
And reverence, to the level of the hills.

O Golden Age, whose light is of the dawn,
And not of sunset, forward, not behind,
Flood the new heavens and earth, and with thee bring
All the old virtues, whatsoever things
Are pure and honest and of good repute,[5]
But add thereto whatever bard has sung
Or seer has told of when in trance and dream
They saw the Happy Isles[6] of prophecy!
Let Justice hold her scale, and Truth divide
Between the right and wrong; but give the heart
The freedom of its fair inheritance;

---

[4] Quoted from *The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-Grinder*, a satirical parody by George Canning, the English statesman, upon a poem by Robert Southey.

[5] *Philippians* iv. 8.

[6] The Fortunate Islands which were supposed by the ancients to lie in the western ocean.

Let the poor prisoner, cramped and starved so long,
At Nature's table feast his ear and eye
With joy and wonder; let all harmonies
Of sound, form, color, motion, wait upon
The princely guest, whether in soft attire
Of leisure clad, or the coarse frock of toil,
And, lending life to the dead form of faith,
Give human nature reverence for the sake
Of One who bore it, making it divine
Within the ineffable tenderness of God;
Let common need, the brotherhood of prayer,
The heirship of an unknown destiny,
The unsolved mystery round about us, make
A man more precious than the gold of Ophir.[7]
Sacred, inviolate, unto whom all things
Should minister, as outward types and signs
Of the eternal beauty which fulfils
The one great purpose of creation, Love,
The sole necessity of Earth and Heaven!
1868 1868

IN SCHOOL-DAYS

Still sits the school-house by the road,
A ragged beggar sleeping;
Around it still the sumachs grow,
And blackberry vines are creeping.

Within, the master's desk is seen,
Deep scarred by raps official;
The warping floor, the battered seats,
The jack-knife's carved initial;

The charcoal frescoes on its wall;
Its door's worn sill, betraying
The feet that, creeping slow to school,
Went storming out to playing!

Long years ago a winter sun
Shone over it at setting;
Lit up its western window-panes,
And low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,
And brown eyes full of grieving,
Of one who still her steps delayed
When all the school were leaving.

For near her stood the little boy
Her childish favor singled:
His cap pulled low upon a face
Where pride and shame were mingled.

Pushing with restless feet the snow
To right and left, he lingered;—
As restlessly her tiny hands
The blue-checked apron fingered.

He saw her lift her eyes; he felt
The soft hand's light caressing,
And heard the tremble of her voice,
As if a fault confessing.

"I'm sorry that I spelt the word:
I hate to go above you,
Because,"—the brown eyes lower fell,—
"Because, you see, I love you!"

Still memory to a gray-haired man
That sweet child-face is showing.
Dear girl! the grasses on her grave
Have forty years been growing!

He lives to learn, in life's hard school,
How few who pass above him
Lament their triumph and his loss,
Like her,—because they love him.
1870 1870

MY TRIUMPH

The autumn-time has come;
On woods that dream of bloom,
And over purpling vines,
The low sun fainter shines.

The aster-flower is failing,
The hazel's gold is paling;
Yet overhead more near
The eternal stars appear!

And present gratitude
Insures the future's good,
And for the things I see
I trust the things to be;

That in the paths untrod,
And the long days of God,
My feet shall still be led,
My heart be comforted.

O living friends who love me!
O dear ones gone above me!
Careless of other fame,
I leave to you my name.

Hide it from idle praises,
Save it from evil phrases:
Why, when dear lips that spake it
Are dumb, should strangers wake it?

---

[7] A country, possibly India or Arabia, frequently mentioned in the Bible as rich in gold, silver, jewels, ivory, and sandal-wood.

Let the thick curtain fall;
I better know than all
How little I have gained,
How vast the unattained.

Not by the page word-painted
Let life be banned or sainted:
Deeper than written scroll
The colors of the soul.

Sweeter than any sung
My songs that found no tongue;
Nobler than any fact
My wish that failed of act.[1]

Others shall sing the song,
Others shall right the wrong,—
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of win.

What matter, I or they?
Mine or another's day,
So the right word be said
And life the sweeter made?

Hail to the coming singers!
Hail to the brave light-bringers!
Forward I reach and share
All that they sing and dare.

The airs of heaven blow o'er me;
A glory shines before me
Of what mankind shall be,—
Pure, generous, brave, and free.

A dream of man and woman
Diviner but still human,
Solving the riddle old,
Shaping the Age of Gold![2]

The love of God and neighbor;
An equal-handed labor;
The richer life, where beauty
Walks hand in hand with duty.

Ring, bells in unreared steeples,
The joy of unborn peoples!
Sound, trumpets far off blown,
Your triumph is my own!

Parcel and part of all,
I keep the festival,
Fore-reach the good to be,
And share the victory.

I feel the earth move sunward,
I join the great march onward,
And take, by faith, while living,
My freehold of thanksgiving.

1870 1871

JOHN UNDERHILL[1]

A score of years had come and gone
Since the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth stone,
When Captain Underhill, bearing scars
From Indian ambush and Flemish wars,
Left three-hilled Boston and wandered down,
East by north, to Cocheco[2] town.

With Vane the younger,[3] in council sweet,
He had sat at Anna Hutchinson's feet,
And, when the bolt of banishment fell
On the head of his saintly oracle,
He had shared her ill as her good report,
And braved the wrath of the General Court.

He shook from his feet as he rode away
The dust of the Massachusetts Bay.
The world might bless and the world might ban,
What did it matter the perfect man,
To whom the freedom of earth was given,
Proof against sin, and sure of heaven?

He cheered his heart as he rode along
With screed[4] of Scripture and holy song,

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[1] Cf. Browning's *Rabbi Ben Ezra:*

> "What I aspired to be,
> And was not comforts me";
>
> . . . .
>
> "All I could never be,
> All, men ignored in me,
> This, I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped."

[2] The fabled primeval age of innocence and happiness.

[1] Captain Underhill, c. 1600-1672, after having served in the Netherlands and in Spain, came to Massachusetts in 1630. Here he was a member of the Massachusetts Assembly and aided valiantly in putting down the Pequot rebellion. Being disfranchised by the Massachusetts court, and fearing to face a charge of adultery, he fled to Cocheco (Dover, New Hampshire), where he was chosen governor. Later he returned to Massachusetts, publicly confessed his sins, and was reinstated. After this he lived in the New Haven colony and among the Dutch in New Netherlands, doing excellent service as an Indian fighter. His career, which shows a strange mixture of courage, passion, humility, integrity, and hypocrisy, is pretty thoroughly set forth in Winthrop's *History,* even to his "taking" [smoking] of tobacco. Some knowledge of his life is a most interesting sidelight upon the trials of those who administered law and formal religion in the New England colonies.

[2] Dover, New Hampshire.

[3] Sir Harry Vane, governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony 1636-37, whose independence and breadth of view were unusual in his time. He sympathized with Mrs. Hutchinson, a religious extremist who was banished from the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1637 because of her views.

[4] quotation

Or thought how he rode with his lances free
By the Lower Rhine and the Zuyder-Zee,
Till his wood-path grew to a trodden road,
And Hilton Point[5] in the distance showed.

He saw the church with the blockhouse nigh,
The two fair rivers, the flakes thereby,
And, tacking to windward, low and crank,
The little shallop from Strawberry Bank;[5]
And he rose in his stirrups and looked abroad
Over land and water, and praised the Lord.

Goodly and stately and grave to see,
Into the clearing's space rode he,
With the sun on the hilt of his sword in sheath,
And his silver buckles and spurs beneath,
And the settlers welcomed him, one and all,
From swift Quampeagan to Gonic Fall.[5]

And he said to the elders: "Lo, I come
As the way seemed open to seek a home.
Somewhat the Lord hath wrought by my hands
In the Narragansett and Netherlands,
And if here ye have work for a Christian man,
I will tarry, and serve ye as best I can.

"I boast not of gifts, but fain would own
The wonderful favor God hath shown,
The special mercy vouchsafed one day
On the shore of Narragansett Bay,
As I sat, with my pipe, from the camp aside,
And mused like Isaac at eventide.

"A sudden sweetness of peace I found,
A garment of gladness wrapped me round;
I felt from the law of works released,
The strife of the flesh and spirit ceased,
My faith to a full assurance grew,
And all I had hoped for myself I knew.

"Now as God appointeth, I keep my way,
I shall not stumble, I shall not stray;
He hath taken away my fig-leaf dress,
I wear the robe of His righteousness;
And the shafts of Satan no more avail
Than Pequot arrows on Christian mail."

"Tarry with us," the settler cried,
"Thou man of God, as our ruler and guide."
And Captain Underhill bowed his head.
"The will of the Lord be done!" he said.
And the morrow beheld him sitting down
In the ruler's seat in Cocheco town.

And he judged therein as a just man should;
His words were wise and his rule was good;
He coveted not his neighbor's land,
From the holding of bribes he shook his hand;
And through the camps of the heathen ran
A wholesome fear of the valiant man.

But the heart is deceitful, the good Book saith,
And life hath ever a savor of death.
Through hymns of triumph the tempter calls,
And whoso thinketh he standeth falls.
Alas! ere their round the seasons ran,
There was grief in the soul of the saintly man.

The tempter's arrows that rarely fail
Had found the joints of his spiritual mail;
And men took note of his gloomy air,
The shame in his eye, the halt in his prayer,
The signs of a battle lost within,
The pain of a soul in the coils of sin.

Then a whisper of scandal linked his name
With broken vows and a life of blame;
And the people looked askance on him
As he walked among them sullen and grim,
Ill at ease, and bitter of word,
And prompt of quarrel with hand or sword.

None knew how, with prayer and fasting still,
He strove in the bonds of his evil will;
But he shook himself like Samson at length,
And girded anew his loins of strength,
And bade the crier go up and down
And call together the wondering town.

Jeer and murmur and shaking of head
Ceased as he rose in his place and said:
"Men, brethren, and fathers, well ye know
How I came among you a year ago,
Strong in the faith that my soul was freed
From sin of feeling, or thought, or deed.

"I have sinned, I own it with grief and shame,
But not with a lie on my lips I came.
In my blindness I verily thought my heart
Swept and garnished in every part.

---

[5] Near Dover.

He chargeth His angels with folly; He sees
The heavens unclean. Was I more than these?

"I urge no plea. At your feet I lay
The trust you gave me, and go my way.
Hate me or pity me, as you will,
The Lord will have mercy on sinners still;
And I, who am chiefest, say to all,
Watch and pray, lest ye also fall."

No voice made answer; a sob so low
That only his quickened ear could know
Smote his heart with a bitter pain,
As into the forest he rode again,
And the veil of its oaken leaves shut down
On his latest glimpse of Cocheco town.

Crystal-clear on the man of sin
The streams flashed up, and the sky shone in;
On his cheek of fever the cool wind blew,
The leaves dropped on him their tears of dew,
And angels of God, in the pure, sweet guise
Of flowers, looked on him with sad surprise.

Was his ear at fault that brook and breeze
Sang in their saddest of minor keys?
What was it the mournful wood-thrush said?
What whispered the pine-trees overhead?
Did he hear the Voice on his lonely way
That Adam heard in the cool of day?

Into the desert alone rode he,
Alone with the Infinite Purity;
And, bowing his soul to its tender rebuke,
As Peter did to the Master's look,
He measured his path with prayers of pain
For peace with God and nature again.

And in after years to Cocheco came
The bruit of a once familiar name;
How among the Dutch of New Netherlands,
From wild Danskamer to Haarlem sands,
A penitent soldier preached the Word,
And smote the heathen with Gideon's sword![6]

And the heart of Boston was glad to hear
How he harried the foe on the long frontier,
And heaped on the land against him barred
The coals of his generous watch and ward.
Frailest and bravest! the Bay State still
Counts with her worthies John Underhill.

1873 1873

CONDUCTOR BRADLEY[1]

Conductor Bradley, (always may his name
Be said with reverence!) as the swift doom came,
Smitten to death, a crushed and mangled frame,

Sank, with the brake he grasped just where he stood
To do the utmost that a brave man could,
And die, if needful, as a true man should.

Men stooped above him; women dropped their tears
On that poor wreck beyond all hopes or fears,
Lost in the strength and glory of his years.

What heard they? Lo! the ghastly lips of pain,
Dead to all thought save duty's, moved again:
"Put out the signals for the other train!"

No nobler utterance since the world began
From lips of saint or martyr ever ran,
Electric, through the sympathies of man.

Ah me! how poor and noteless seem to this
The sick-bed dramas of self-consciousness,
Our sensual fears of pain and hopes of bliss!

Oh, grand supreme endeavor! Not in vain
That last brave act of failing tongue and brain!
Freighted with life the downward rushing train,

Following the wrecked one, as wave follows wave,
Obeyed the warning which the dead lips gave.
Others he saved, himself he could not save.

Nay, the lost life *was* saved. He is not dead
Who, in his record still the earth shall tread
With God's clear aureole shining round his head.

We bow as in the dust, with all our pride
Of virtue dwarfed the noble deed beside.
God give us grace to live as Bradley died!

1873

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[6] *Judges* vii. 18.

[1] "A railway conductor who lost his life in an accident on a Connecticut railway, May 9, 1873." (Cambridge Edition of Whittier's poems, p. 117.)

A SEA DREAM

We saw the slow tides go and come,
The curving surf-lines lightly drawn,
The gray rocks touched with tender bloom
Beneath the fresh-blown rose of dawn.

We saw in richer sunsets lost
The somber pomp of showery noons;
And signaled spectral sails that crossed
The weird, low light of rising moons.

On stormy eves from cliff and head
We saw the white spray tossed and spurned;
While over all, in gold and red,
Its face of fire the lighthouse turned.

The rail-car brought its daily crowds,
Half curious, half indifferent,
Like passing sails or floating clouds,
We saw them as they came and went.

But, one calm morning, as we lay
And watched the mirage-lifted wall
Of coast, across the dreamy bay,
And heard afar the curlew call,

And nearer voices, wild or tame,
Of airy flocks and childish throng,
Up from the water's edge there came
Faint snatches of familiar song.

Careless we heard the singer's choice
Of old and common airs; at last
The tender pathos of his voice
In one low chanson held us fast.

A song that mingled joy and pain,
And memories old and sadly sweet;
While, timing to its minor strain,
The waves in lapsing cadence beat.

The waves are glad in breeze and sun;
The rocks are fringed with foam;
I walk once more a haunted shore,
A stranger, yet at home,
A land of dreams I roam.

Is this the wind, the soft sea-wind
That stirred thy locks of brown?
Are these the rocks whose mosses knew
The trail of thy light gown,
Where boy and girl sat down?

I see the gray fort's broken wall,
The boats that rock below;
And, out at sea, the passing sails
We saw so long ago
Rose-red in morning's glow.

The freshness of the early time
On every breeze is blown;
As glad the sea, as blue the sky,—
The change is ours alone;
The saddest is my own.

A stranger now, a world-worn man,
Is he who bears my name;
But thou, methinks, whose mortal life
Immortal youth became,
Art evermore the same.

Thou art not here, thou art not there,
Thy place I cannot see;
I only know that where thou art
The blessed angels be,
And heaven is glad for thee.

Forgive me if the evil years
Have left on me their sign;
Wash out, O soul so beautiful,
The many stains of mine
In tears of love divine!

I could not look on thee and live,
If thou wert by my side;
The vision of a shining one,
The white and heavenly bride,
Is well to me denied.

But turn to me thy dear girl-face
Without the angel's crown,
The wedded roses of thy lips,
Thy loose hair rippling down
In waves of golden brown.

Look forth once more through space and time,
And let thy sweet shade fall
In tenderest grace of soul and form
On memory's frescoed wall,
A shadow, and yet all!

Draw near, more near, forever dear!
Where'er I rest or roam,
Or in the city's crowded streets,
Or by the blown sea foam,
The thought of thee is home!

At breakfast hour the singer read
The city news, with comment wise,
Like one who felt the pulse of trade
Beneath his finger fall and rise.

His look, his air, his curt speech, told
The man of action, not of books,
To whom the corners made in gold
And stocks were more than seaside nooks.

Of life beneath the life confessed
His song had hinted unawares;
Of flowers in traffic's ledgers pressed,
Of human hearts in bulls and bears.

But eyes in vain were turned to watch
That face so hard and shrewd and strong;
And ears in vain grew sharp to catch
The meaning of that morning song.

In vain some sweet-voiced querist sought
To sound him, leaving as she came;
Her baited album only caught
A common, unromantic name.

No word betrayed the mystery fine,
That trembled on the singer's tongue;
He came and went, and left no sign
Behind him save the song he sung.
1874

SUNSET ON THE BEARCAMP[1]

A gold fringe on the purpling hem
Of hills the river runs,
As down its long, green valley falls
The last of summer's suns.
Along its tawny gravel-bed
Broad-flowing, swift, and still,
As if its meadow levels felt
The hurry of the hill.
Noiseless between its banks of green
From curve to curve it slips;
The drowsy maple-shadows rest
Like fingers on its lips.

A waif from Carroll's[2] wildest hills,
Unstoried and unknown;
The ursine legend of its name
Prowls on its banks alone.
Yet flowers as fair its slopes adorn
As ever Yarrow[3] knew,
Or, under rainy Irish skies,
By Spenser's Mulla[4] grew;
And through the gaps of leaning trees
Its mountain cradle shows:
The gold against the amethyst,
The green against the rose.

Touched by a light that hath no name,
A glory never sung,
Aloft on sky and mountain wall
Are God's great pictures hung.
How changed the summits vast and old!
No longer granite-browed,
They melt in rosy mist; the rock
Is softer than the cloud;
The valley holds its breath; no leaf
Of all its elms is twirled;
The silence of eternity
Seems falling on the world.

The pause before the breaking seals
Of mystery is this;
Yon miracle-play of night and day
Makes dumb its witnesses.
What unseen altar crowns the hills
That reach up stair on stair?
What eyes look through, what white wings fan
These purple veils of air?
What Presence from the heavenly heights
To those of earth stoops down?
Not vainly Hellas dreamed of gods
On Ida's snowy crown![5]

Slow fades the vision of the sky,
The golden water pales,
And over all the valley-land
A gray-winged vapor sails.
I go the common way of all;
The sunset fires will burn,
The flowers will blow, the river flow,
When I no more return.
No whisper from the mountain pine
Nor lapsing stream shall tell
The stranger, treading where I tread,
Of him who loved them well.

But beauty seen is never lost,
God's colors all are fast;
The glory of this sunset heaven
Into my soul has passed,
A sense of gladness unconfined
To mortal date or clime;
As the soul liveth, it shall live
Beyond the years of time.
Beside the mystic asphodels[6]
Shall bloom the home-born flowers,
And new horizons flush and glow
With sunset hues of ours.

Farewell! these smiling hills must wear
Too soon their wintry frown,

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[1] Whittier was very fond of the scenery near Ossipee, N. H., on the Bearcamp River.

[2] Carroll County, New Hampshire.

[3] The Scotch stream and valley made famous by Wordsworth's *Yarrow Unvisited,* and other poems.

[4] Edmund Spenser lived for a time in Kilcolman Castle near the Mulla River in Ireland.

[5] The Greeks naturally peopled the beautiful Mt. Ida with gods.

[6] A flower of the lily order. In Greek mythology the asphodel covered the meadows of the underworld and was associated with the dead.

And snow-cold winds from off them shake
The maple's red leaves down.
But I shall see a summer sun
Still setting broad and low;
The mountain slopes shall blush and bloom,
The golden water flow.
A lover's claim is mine on all
I see to have and hold,—
The rose-light of perpetual hills,
And sunsets never cold!

1876 1876

THE TRAILING ARBUTUS

I wandered lonely where the pine-trees made
Against the bitter East their barricade,
And, guided by its sweet
Perfume, I found, within a narrow dell,
The trailing spring flower tinted like a shell
Amid dry leaves and mosses at my feet.

From under dead boughs, for whose loss the pines
Moaned ceaseless overhead, the blossoming vines
Lifted their glad surprise,
While yet the bluebird smoothed in leafless trees
His feathers ruffled by the chill sea-breeze,
And snow-drifts lingered under April skies.

As, pausing o'er the lonely flower I bent,
I thought of lives thus lowly, clogged and pent,
Which yet find room,
Through care and cumber, coldness and decay,
To lend a sweetness to the ungenial day,
And make the sad earth happier for their bloom.

1879

THE LOST OCCASION[1]

Some die too late and some too soon,
At early morning, heat of noon,
Or the chill evening twilight. Thou,
Whom the rich heavens did so endow
With eyes of power and Jove's[2] own brow,
With all the massive strength that fills
Thy home-horizon's granite hills,
With rarest gifts of heart and head
From manliest stock inherited,
New England's stateliest type of man,
In port and speech Olympian;
Whom no one met, at first, but took
A second awed and wondering look
(As turned, perchance the eyes of Greece
On Phidias' unveiled masterpiece);[3]
Whose words in simplest homespun clad,
The Saxon strength of Caedmon's[4] had,
With power reserved at need to reach
The Roman forum's loftiest speech,
Sweet with persuasion, eloquent
In passion, cool in argument,
Or, ponderous, falling on thy foes
As fell the Norse god's[5] hammer blows,
Crushing as if with Talus'[6] flail
Through Error's logic-woven mail,
And failing only when they tried
The adamant of the righteous side,—
Thou, foiled in aim and hope, bereaved
Of old friends, by the new deceived,
Too soon for us, too soon for thee,
Beside thy lonely Northern sea,
Where long and low the marsh-lands spread,
Laid wearily down thy august head.

Thou shouldst have lived to feel below
Thy feet Disunion's fierce upthrow;
The late-sprung mine that underlaid
Thy sad concessions vainly made.
Thou shouldst have seen from Sumter's wall
The star-flag of the Union fall,
And armed rebellion pressing on
The broken lines of Washington!
No stronger voice than thine had then
Called out the utmost might of men,
To make the Union's charter free
And strengthen law by liberty.
How had that stern arbitrament
To thy gray age youth's vigor lent,
Shaming ambition's paltry prize
Before thy disillusioned eyes;
Breaking the spell about thee wound
Like the green withes that Samson bound;[7]
Redeeming in one effort grand,

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[1] This poem, written thirty years after *Ichabod*, shows Whittier's softened feeling regarding Webster, but it is still tinged by strong Abolition sentiment. See note 2, p. 563.

[2] Carlyle, who once saw Webster, described his eyes as: "dull black eyes under their precipice of brows like dull anthracite furnaces needing only to be *blown*"; Webster's large head and great forehead made him seem indeed Olympian. The remark of Richard Brinsley Sheridan concerning Lord Thurlow, that "no man was ever so wise as Lord Thurlow looked," might well have been made of Webster.

[3] The colossal statue of Zeus at Olympia.

[4] An Old English poet who died about 680. His life is narrated in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of England*. See note 17, p. 830.

[5] Thor, the Scandinavian god of thunder, who carried a mighty hammer.

[6] An iron man who carried an iron flail with which he threshed out falsehood. See Spenser's *Faerie Queene* V. i. 12.

[7] *Judges* xvi. 6-9.

Thyself and thy imperiled land!
Ah, cruel fate, that closed to thee,
O sleeper by the Northern sea,
The gates of opportunity!
God fills the gaps of human need,
Each crisis brings its word and deed.
Wise men and strong we did not lack;
But still, with memory turning back,
In the dark hours we thought of thee,
And thy lone grave beside the sea.

Above that grave the east winds blow,
And from the marsh-lands drifting slow
The sea-fog comes, with evermore
The wave-wash of a lonely shore,
And sea-bird's melancholy cry,
As Nature fain would typify
The sadness of a closing scene,
The loss of that which should have been.
But, where thy native mountains bare
Their foreheads to diviner air,
Fit emblem of enduring fame,
One lofty summit keeps thy name.[8]
For thee the cosmic forces did
The rearing of that pyramid,
The prescient ages shaping with
Fire, flood, and frost thy monolith.
Sunrise and sunset lay thereon
With hands of light their benison,
The stars of midnight pause to set
Their jewels in its coronet.
And evermore that mountain mass
Seems climbing from the shadowy pass
To light, as if to manifest
Thy nobler self, thy life at best!
1880

THE KING'S MISSIVE[1]

1661

Under the great hill sloping bare
To cove and meadow and Common lot,
In his council chamber and oaken chair,
Sat the worshipful Governor Endicott.
A grave, strong man, who knew no peer
In the pilgrim land, where he ruled in fear
Of God, not man, and for good or ill
Held his trust with an iron will.

He had shorn with his sword the cross[2] from out
The flag, and cloven the May-pole down,
Harried the heathen round about,
And whipped the Quakers from town to town.
Earnest and honest, a man at need
To burn like a torch for his own harsh creed,
He kept with the flaming brand of his zeal
The gate of the holy common weal.

His brow was clouded, his eye was stern,
With a look of mingled sorrow and wrath;
"Woe's me!" he murmured: "at every turn
The pestilent Quakers are in my path!
Some we have scourged, and banished some,
Some hanged, more doomed, and still they come,
Fast as the tide of yon bay sets in,
Sowing their heresy's seed of sin.

"Did we count on this? Did we leave behind
The graves of our kin, the comfort and ease
Of our English hearths and homes, to find
Troublers of Israel such as these?
Shall I spare? Shall I pity them? God forbid!
I will do as the prophet to Agag did:[3]
They come to poison the wells of the Word,
I will hew them in pieces before the Lord!"

The door swung open, and Rawson the clerk
Entered, and whispered under breath,
"There waits below for the hangman's work
A fellow banished on pain of death—
Shattuck of Salem, unhealed of the whip,
Brought over in Master Goldsmith's ship
At anchor here in a Christian port,
With freight of the devil and all his sort!"

Twice and thrice on the chamber floor
Striding fiercely from wall to wall,
"The Lord do so to me and more,"
The Governor cried, "if I hang not all!
Bring hither the Quaker." Calm, sedate,

---

[8] Mount Webster, in the White Mountains.

[1] This poem was based on a historic incident. Endicott, governor of Massachusetts from 1649 to 1665, except during 1650 and 1654 when he was deputy governor, had been very harsh in his persecution of the Quakers. They had been imprisoned or driven out of the colony, but had persisted in returning until finally a law was passed punishing with death any Quaker that returned after having been sent away. In October, 1659, two men were hanged, and in the spring of 1660 Mrs. Mary Dyer suffered death for her faith. Meantime a petition in behalf of the Quakers had been sent to Charles II, who in May, 1660, had been restored to the throne of England. The poem tells, with considerable poetic license Whittier says, how the King's letter demanding toleration of the Quakers was received.

[2] Apparently thinking it a mark of Catholicism, he had cut the royal red cross of St. George out of the flag of a Salem company of militia. See in Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales, Endicott and the Red Cross.* For the maypole story see, in the same book, *The Maypole of Merry Mount.*

[3] 1 *Samuel* xv. 8.

With the look of a man at ease with fate,
Into that presence grim and dread
Came Samuel Shattuck, with hat on head.

"Off with the knave's hat!" An angry hand
Smote down the offence; but the wearer said,
With a quiet smile, "By the King's command
I bear his message and stand in his stead."
In the governor's hand a missive he laid
With the royal arms on its seal displayed,
And the proud man spake as he gazed thereat,
Uncovering, "Give Mr. Shattuck his hat."

He turned to the Quaker, bowing low,—
"The King commandeth your friends' release;
Doubt not he shall be obeyed, although
To his subjects' sorrow and sin's increase.
What he here enjoineth, John Endicott,
His loyal servant, questioneth not.
You are free! God grant the spirit you own
May take you from us to parts unknown."

So the door of the jail was open cast,
And, like Daniel, out of the lion's den[4]
Tender youth and girlhood passed,
With age-bowed women and gray-locked men.
And the voice of one appointed to die
Was lifted in praise and thanks on high,
And the little maid from New Netherlands
Kissed, in her joy, the doomed man's hands.

And one, whose call was to minister
To the souls in prison, beside him went,
An ancient woman, bearing with her
The linen shroud for his burial meant.
For she, not counting her own life dear,
In the strength of a love that cast out fear,
Had watched and served where her brethren died,
Like those who waited the cross beside.

One moment they paused on their way to look
On the martyr graves by the Common side,
And much scourged Wharton of Salem took
His burden of prophecy up and cried:
"Rest, souls of the valiant! Not in vain
Have ye borne the Master's cross of pain;
Ye have fought the fight, ye are victors crowned,
With a fourfold chain ye have Satan bound!"

The autumn haze lay soft and still
On wood and meadow and upland farms;
On the brow of Snow Hill the great windmill
Slowly and lazily swung its arms;
Broad in the sunshine stretched away,
With its capes and islands, the turquoise bay;
And over water and dusk of pines
Blue hills lifted their faint outlines.

The topaz leaves of the walnut glowed,
The sumach added its crimson fleck,
And double in air and water showed
The tinted maples along the Neck;[5]
Through frost flower clusters of pale star-mist,
And gentian fringes of amethyst,
And royal plumes of golden-rod,
The grazing cattle on Centry[6] trod.

But as they who see not, the Quakers saw
The world about them; they only thought
With deep thanksgiving and pious awe
On the great deliverance God had wrought.
Through lane and alley the gazing town
Noisily followed them up and down;
Some with scoffing and brutal jeer,
Some with pity and words of cheer.

One brave voice rose above the din.
Upsall, gray with his length of days,
Cried from the door of his Red Lion Inn:
"Men of Boston, give God the praise!
No more shall innocent blood call down
The bolts of wrath on your guilty town.
The freedom of worship, dear to you,
Is dear to all, and to all is due.

"I see the vision of days to come,
When your beautiful City of the Bay,
Shall be Christian liberty's chosen home,
And none shall his neighbor's rights gainsay.
The varying notes of worship shall blend
And as one great prayer to God ascend,
And hands of mutual charity raise
Walls of salvation and gates of praise."

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[4] *Daniel* vi. 23.

[5] The name in early times for the narrow strip of land that connected the peninsula of Boston with the mainland.

[6] Beacon Hill in early times, because it was a point of observation, was frequently called Sentry or Centry Hill.

So passed the Quakers through Boston town,
Whose painful ministers sighed to see
The walls of their sheep-fold falling down,
And wolves of heresy prowling free.
But the years went on, and brought no wrong;
With milder counsels the State grew strong,
As outward Letter and inward Light[7]
Kept the balance of truth aright.

The Puritan spirit perishing not,
To Concord's yeomen the signal sent,
And spake in the voice of the cannon-shot
That severed the chains of a continent.
With its gentler mission of peace and good-will
The thought of the Quaker is living still,
And the freedom of soul he prophesied
Is gospel and law where the martyrs died.

1880 1881

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Born, Portland, Maine, 1807, died, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1882. Longfellow was born in a family of social prominence, his father being a lawyer and congressman. He was graduated from Bowdoin College in 1825, traveled and studied in Europe 1826-1829, was professor of modern languages at Bowdoin 1829-1835, and at Harvard College, 1836-1854. His life was that of a teacher, scholar, and writer in fortunate surroundings. In 1833 he published a prose work, *Outre-Mer, A Pilgrimage beyond the Sea,* and in 1839 another, *Hyperion.* The publication of his poems runs from 1826 to 1883, its chief landmarks being *Evangeline,* 1847, *Hiawatha,* 1855, *Tales of a Wayside Inn,* 1863. The most serious work of his life was the translation of the *Divina Commedia,* completed in 1867.

A PSALM OF LIFE

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN SAID TO THE PSALMIST[1]

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!—
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each tomorrow
Find us farther than today.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,[2]
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

1838 1839

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS

There is a Reaper whose name is Death,
And, with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have nought that is fair?" saith he;
"Have nought but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,"
The Reaper said, and smiled;

---

[7] The Quaker faith is based largely on the revelations to each of the Inward Light.

[1] King David, whose psalms are among the greatest poems of Hebrew literature.

[2] "Vita brevis, ars longa," a thought probably expressed first by Hippocrates, the Greek philosopher, 460-377 B. C., and later by Seneca, in *De Brevitate Vitae I.*

"Dear tokens of the earth are they,
  Where he was once a child.

"They shall all bloom in fields of light,
  Transplanted by my care,
And saints, upon their garments white,
  These sacred blossoms wear."

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,
  The flowers she most did love;
She knew she should find them all again
  In the fields of light above.

O, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
  The Reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
  And took the flowers away.

1838

1839

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS[1]

It was the schooner Hesperus,
  That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughtèr,
  To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,
  Her cheeks like the dawn of day,
And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,
  That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
  His pipe was in his mouth,
And he watched how the veering flaw did blow
  The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailòr,
  Had sailed to the Spanish Main,[2]
"I pray thee, put into yonder port,
  For I fear a hurricane.

"Last night the moon had a golden ring,
  And tonight no moon we see!"
The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe,
  And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
  A gale from the Northeast,
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
  And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
  The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused, like a frighted steed,
  Then leaped her cable's length.

"Come hither! come hither! my little daughtèr,
  And do not tremble so;
For I can weather the roughest gale
  That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat
  Against the stinging blast;
He cut a rope from a broken spar,
  And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church-bells ring,[3]
  Oh say, what may it be?"
"'Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!"—
  And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns,
  Oh say, what may it be?"
"Some ship in distress, that cannot live
  In such an angry sea!"

"O father! I see a gleaming light,
  Oh say, what may it be?"
But the father answered never a word,
  A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
  With his face turned to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow,
  On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed
  That savèd she might be;
And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,
  On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
  Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
  Tow'rds the reef of Norman's Woe.[4]

And ever the fitful gusts between
  A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf
  On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

---

[1] This is an unusually good imitation of the ancient English popular ballad. Note the similarity of the fourth and fifth stanzas to the second, sixth, and seventh of *Sir Patrick Spens,* and compare the concluding invocation with that of *The Hunting of the Cheviot.*

[2] A common name for the northern coast of South America or more especially the waters north of that coast.

[3] The suggestion of impending woe is in the manner of the ancient ballads.

[4] A dangerous reef just outside Gloucester harbor, Massachusetts.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves
Looked soft as carded wool,
But the cruel rocks, they gored her side
Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass, she stove and sank,
Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach,
A fisherman stood aghast,
To see the form of a maiden fair,
Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,
The salt tears in her eyes;
And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed,
On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus,
In the midnight and the snow!
Christ save us all from a death like this,
On the reef of Norman's Woe!

1839 1840

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

Under a spreading chestnut-tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice,
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice,
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees its close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought!

1839 1841

HYMN TO THE NIGHT

Ἀσπασίη, τρίλλιστος[1]

I heard the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!

I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rimes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,—
From those deep cisterns flows.

---

[1] ". . . Welcome, thrice prayed-for . . ." *Iliad*, viii. 488.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer![2]
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,
The best-beloved Night!

1839 1839

THE SKELETON IN ARMOR[1]

"Speak! speak! thou fearful guest!
Who, with thy hollow breast,
Still in rude armor drest,
Comest to daunt me!
Wrapt not in Eastern balms,[2]
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms,
Why dost thou haunt me?"

Then from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
Gleam in December;
And, like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
From the heart's chamber.

"I was a Viking[3] old!
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald[4] in song has told,
No Saga[5] taught thee!
Take heed that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse;
For this I sought thee.

"Far in the Northern Land,
By the wild Baltic's strand,
I, with my childish hand,
Tamed the gerfalcon;[6]
And, with my skates fast-bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
Trembled to walk on.

"Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
Fled like a shadow;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf's[7] bark
Until the soaring lark
Sang from the meadow.

"But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair's crew,
O'er the dark sea I flew
With the marauders.
Wild was the life we led;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
By our stern orders.

"Many a wassail-bout[8]
Wore the long winter out;
Often our midnight shout
Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk's[9] tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail
Filled to o'erflowing.

"Once as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning yet tender;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendor.

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest's shade
Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest
Fluttered her little breast,
Like birds within their nest
By the hawk frighted.

"Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
Chanting his glory;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
To hear my story.

---

[2] Orestes, in Æschylus's drama *The Eumenides*, when seeking peace from the furies, prays to the goddess Athena for righteous judgment.

[1] "A skeleton had been dug up at Fall River clad in broken and corroded armor; and the idea occurred to me of connecting it with the Round Tower at Newport."—Longfellow's note. The tower was once thought to be of Norse origin, but has been proved modern.

[2] As the Egyptian dead were wrapped in spices.

[3] Scandinavian sea-rover.

[4] bard (Scandinavian)

[5] Ancient Norse heroic legend.

[6] An Arctic falcon of unusual fierceness.

[7] A man-wolf; one who can turn himself into wolf, or has been turned into a wolf, still retaining human intelligence.

[8] carouse

[9] A wild Scandinavian warrior of barbaric times; probably one who fought "bear-sark," i.e., clad in a bear-skin shirt.

"While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed,
And as the wind-gusts waft
The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
Blew the foam lightly.

"She was a Prince's child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
I was discarded!
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew's flight?
Why did they leave that night
Her nest unguarded?

"Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,
Fairest of all was she
Among the Norsemen!
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armèd hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
With twenty horsemen.

"Then launched they to the blast,
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
When the wind failed us;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,[10]
So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hailed us.

"And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
'Death!' was the helmsman's hail,
'Death without quarter!'
Midships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel;
Down her black hulk did reel
Through the black water!

"As with his wings aslant,
Sails the fierce cormorant,
Seeking some rocky haunt,
With his prey laden,—
So toward the open main,
Beating to sea again,
Through the wild hurricane,
Bore I the maiden.

"Three weeks we westward bore,
And when the storm was o'er,
Cloud-like we saw the shore
Stretching to leeward;
There for my lady's bower
Built I the lofty tower,
Which, to this very hour,
Stands looking seaward.

"There lived we many years;
Time dried the maiden's tears;
She had forgot her fears,
She was a mother;
Death closed her mild blue eyes;
Under that tower she lies;
Ne'er shall the sun arise
On such another!

"Still grew my bosom then,
Still as a stagnant fen!
Hateful to me were men,
The sunlight hateful!
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
Oh, death was grateful!

"Thus, seamed with many scars,
Bursting these prison bars
Up to its native stars
My soul ascended!
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skoal! to the Northland! *skoal!*"[11]
Thus the tale ended.

1840 1841

ENDYMION[1]

The rising moon has hid the stars;
Her level rays, like golden bars,
Lie on the landscape green,
With shadows brown between.

And silver white the river gleams,
As if Diana, in her dreams,
Had dropt her silver bow
Upon the meadows low.

On such a tranquil night as this,
She woke Endymion with a kiss,
When, sleeping in the grove,
He dreamed not of her love.

Like Dian's kiss, unasked, unsought,
Love gives itself, but is not bought;

---

[10] Cape Skagen in northeastern Denmark

[11] "In Scandinavia this was the customary salutation when drinking a health. I have slightly changed the orthography of the word, in order to preserve the correct pronunciation. Longfellow's note.

[1] The legendary Greek youth who, in some legends, was said to have asked Zeus for immortality, eternal youth, and lasting slumber. He was beloved by Selene, the moon (Roman Diana), as he lay sleeping on Mt. Latmos. See Keats's *Endymion*.

Nor voice, nor sound betrays
Its deep, impassioned gaze.

It comes,—the beautiful, the free,
The crown of all humanity,—
In silence and alone
To seek the elected one.

It lifts the boughs, whose shadows deep,
Are Life's oblivion, the soul's sleep,
And kisses the closed eyes
Of him, who slumbering lies.

O weary hearts! O slumbering eyes!
O drooping souls, whose destinies
Are fraught with fear and pain,
Ye shall be loved again!

No one is so accursed by fate,
No one so utterly desolate,
But some heart, though unknown,
Responds unto his own.

Responds,—as if with unseen wings,
An angel touched its quivering strings;
And whispers, in its song,
"Where hast thou stayed so long?"

1841 1841

MAIDENHOOD

Maiden! with the meek, brown eyes,
In whose orbs a shadow lies
Like the dusk in evening skies!

Thou whose locks outshine the sun,
Golden tresses, wreathed in one,
As the braided streamlets run!

Standing, with reluctant feet,
Where the brook and river meet,
Womanhood and childhood fleet!

Gazing, with a timid glance,
On the brooklet's swift advance,
On the river's broad expanse!

Deep and still, that gliding stream
Beautiful to thee must seem,
As the river of a dream.

Then why pause with indecision
When bright angels in thy vision
Beckon thee to fields Elysian?[1]

Seest thou shadows sailing by,
As the dove, with startled eye,
Sees the falcon's shadow fly?

Hearest thou voices on the shore,
That our ears perceive no more,
Deafened by the cataract's roar?

O, thou child of many prayers!
Life hath quicksands,—Life hath snares!
Care and age come unawares!

Like the swell of some sweet tune,
Morning rises into noon,
May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered
Birds and blossoms many-numbered;—
Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows,
When the young heart overflows,
To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand;
Gates of brass cannot withstand
One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth,
In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

O, that dew, like balm, shall steal
Into wounds, that cannot heal,
Even as sleep our eyes doth seal;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

1841 1841

EXCELSIOR[1]

The shades of night were falling fast,
As through an Alpine village passed
A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice,
A banner with the strange device,
Excelsior!

His brow was sad; his eye beneath,
Flashed like a falchion from its sheath,
And like a silver clarion rung
The accents of that unknown tongue,
Excelsior!

In happy homes he saw the light
Of household fires gleam warm and bright;

---

[1] heavenly

[1] Longfellow described his purpose in writing the poem as "to display, in a series of pictures, the life of a man of genius, resisting all temptations, laying aside all fears, heedless of all warnings, and pressing right on to accomplish his purpose. His motto is Excelsior—'higher.'"

Above, the spectral glaciers shone,
And from his lips escaped a groan,
Excelsior!

"Try not the Pass!" the old man said;
"Dark lowers the tempest overhead,
The roaring torrent is deep and wide!"
And loud that clarion voice replied,
Excelsior!

"O stay," the maiden said, "and rest
Thy weary head upon this breast!"
A tear stood in his bright blue eye,
But still he answered, with a sigh,
Excelsior!

"Beware the pine tree's withered branch!
Beware the awful avalanche!"
This was the peasant's last Good-night;
A voice replied far up the height,
Excelsior!

At break of day, as heavenward
The pious monks of Saint Bernard[2]
Uttered the oft-repeated prayer,
A voice cried through the startled air,
Excelsior!

A traveler, by the faithful hound,
Half-buried in the snow was found,
Still grasping in his hand of ice
That banner with the strange device,
Excelsior!

There in the twilight cold and gray,
Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay,
And from the sky, serene and far,
A voice fell, like a falling star,
Excelsior!

1841 1841

MEZZO CAMMIN[1]

WRITTEN AT BOPPARD ON THE RHINE AUGUST 25, 1842, JUST BEFORE LEAVING FOR HOME

Half of my life is gone, and I have let
The years slip from me and have not fulfilled
The aspiration of my youth, to build
Some tower of song with lofty parapet.
Not indolence, nor pleasure, nor the fret
Of restless passions that would not be stilled,
But sorrow, and a care that almost killed,[2]
Kept me from what I may accomplish yet;
Though, half-way up the hill, I see the Past
Lying beneath me with its sounds and sights,—
A city in the twilight dim and vast,
With smoking roofs, soft bells, and gleaming lights,—
And hear above me on the autumnal blast
The cataract of Death far thundering from the heights.

1842 1887

THE ARSENAL AT SPRINGFIELD[1]

This is the Arsenal. From floor to ceiling,
Like a huge organ, rise the burnished arms;
But from their silent pipes no anthem pealing
Startles the villages with strange alarms.

Ah! what a sound will rise, how wild and dreary,
When the death-angel touches those swift keys!
What loud lament and dismal Miserere[2]
Will mingle with their awful symphonies!

I hear even now the infinite fierce chorus,
The cries of agony, the endless groan,
Which, through the ages that have gone before us,
In long reverberations reach our own.

On helm and harness rings the Saxon hammer,
Through Cimbric forest roars the Norseman's song,[3]
And loud, amid the universal clamor,
O'er distant deserts sounds the Tartar gong.

I hear the Florentine, who from his palace
Wheels out his battle-bell[4] with dreadful din,

---

[2] The great monastery, 8108 feet above the sea in the St. Bernard pass leading from Switzerland to Italy, was founded in the tenth or eleventh century. Many lives have been saved by the monks and their faithful dogs.

[1] The middle of the journey. The title was suggested by the first line of *The Inferno,* begun in the thirty-fifth year of Dante's life. See Milton's sonnet *On His Having Arrived at the Age of Twenty-three.*

[2] Longfellow's wife had died in November, 1835.

[1] Massachusetts

[2] The Latin Vulgate version of the 51st Psalm (50th in the Vulgate), beginning "Miserere mei Domine,"—"Have mercy upon me, Oh Lord!"

[3] The reference is probably to Jutland, supposed by the ancients to have been the first home of the Cimbri, a Teutonic tribe who invaded Roman territory and were destroyed in Piedmont 101 B. C.

[4] In time of war, the Florentines of the thirteenth century wheeled out the Martinella, the battle bell, upon the battlefield itself, close by the battle standard.

And Aztec priests upon their teocallis[5]
Beat the wild war-drum made of serpent's skin;

The tumult of each sacked and burning village:
The shout that every prayer for mercy drowns;
The soldiers' revels in the midst of pillage;
The wail of famine in beleaguered towns;

The bursting shell, the gateway wrenched asunder,
The rattling musketry, the clashing blade;
And ever and anon, in tones of thunder,
The diapason of the cannonade.

Is it, O man, with such discordant noises,
With such accursed instruments as these,
Thou drownest Nature's sweet and kindly voices,
And jarrest the celestial harmonies?

Were half the power, that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth, bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals nor forts:

The warrior's name would be a name abhorrèd!
And every nation, that should lift again
Its hand against a brother, on its forehead
Would wear forevermore the curse of Cain!

Down the dark future, through long generations,
The echoing sounds grow fainter and then cease;
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations,
I hear once more the voice of Christ say, "Peace!"

Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals
The blast of War's great organ shakes the skies!
But beautiful as songs of the immortals,
The holy melodies of love arise.

1844 1844

THE BRIDGE

I stood on the bridge at midnight,
As the clocks were striking the hour,
And the moon rose o'er the city,
Behind the dark church-tower.

I saw her bright reflection
In the waters under me,
Like a golden goblet falling
And sinking into the sea.

And far in the hazy distance
Of that lovely night in June,
The blaze of the flaming furnace
Gleamed redder than the moon.

Among the long, black rafters
The wavering shadows lay,
And the current that came from the ocean
Seemed to lift and bear them away;

As, sweeping and eddying through them,
Rose the belated tide,
And, streaming into the moonlight,
The seaweed floated wide.

And like those waters rushing
Among the wooden piers,
A flood of thoughts came o'er me
That filled my eyes with tears.

How often, oh how often,
In the days that had gone by,
I had stood on that bridge at midnight
And gazed on that wave and sky!

How often, oh how often,
I had wished that the ebbing tide
Would bear me away on its bosom
O'er the ocean wild and wide!

For my heart was hot and restless,
And my life was full of care,
And the burden laid upon me
Seemed greater than I could bear.

But now it has fallen from me,
It is buried in the sea;
And only the sorrow of others
Throws its shadow over me.

Yet whenever I cross the river
On its bridge with wooden piers,
Like the odor of brine from the ocean
Comes the thought of other years.

And I think how many thousands
Of care-encumbered men,

---

[5] Flat-topped pyramids for Aztec worship.

Each bearing his burden of sorrow,
Have crossed the bridge since then.

I see the long procession
Still passing to and fro,
The young heart hot and restless,
And the old subdued and slow!

And forever and forever,
As long as the river flows,
As long as the heart has passions,
As long as life has woes;

The moon and its broken reflection
And its shadows shall appear,
As the symbol of love in heaven,
And its wavering image here.

1845 1845

THE OLD CLOCK ON THE STAIRS

> L'éternité est une pendule, dont le balancier dit et redit sans cesse ces deux mots seulement, dans le silence des tombeaux, "Toujours, jamais! Jamais, toujours!"
>
> —Jacques Bridaine.[1]

Somewhat back from the village street
Stands the old-fashioned country-seat.[2]
Across its antique portico
Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw,
And from its station in the hall
An ancient timepiece says to all,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Half-way up the stairs it stands,
And points and beckons with its hands
From its case of massive oak,
Like a monk, who, under his cloak,
Crosses himself, and sighs, alas!
With sorrowful voice to all who pass,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

By day its voice is low and light;
But in the silent dead of night,
Distinct as a passing footstep's fall
It echoes along the vacant hall,
Along the ceiling, along the floor,
And seems to say, at each chamber-door,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Through days of sorrow and of mirth,
Through days of death and days of birth,
Through every swift vicissitude
Of changeful time, unchanged it has stood,
And as if, like God, it all things saw,
It calmly repeats those words of awe,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted Hospitality;
His great fires up the chimney roared;
The stranger feasted at his board;
But, like the skeleton at the feast,
That warning timepiece never ceased,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

There groups of merry children played,
There youths and maidens dreaming strayed.
O precious hours! O golden prime,
And affluence of love and time!
Even as a miser counts his gold,
Those hours the ancient timepiece told,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

From that chamber, clothed in white,
The bride came forth on her wedding night;
There, in that silent room below,
The dead lay in his shroud of snow;
And in the hush that followed the prayer,
Was heard the old clock on the stair,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

All are scattered now and fled,
Some are married, some are dead;
And when I ask, with throbs of pain,
"Ah! when shall they all meet again?"
As in the days long since gone by,
The ancient timepiece makes reply,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

Never here, forever there,
Where all parting, pain, and care,
And death, and time, shall disappear,—
Forever there, but never here!
The horologe of Eternity
Sayeth this incessantly,—
"Forever—never!
Never—forever!"

1845 1845

THE ARROW AND THE SONG

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

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[1] "Eternity is a clock whose pendulum utters and repeats without ceasing these two words only, in the silence of the tomb—'Forever, never! Never, forever!'" Bridaine was a famous Catholic preacher in France (1710-1767).

[2] A house in Pittsfield, Mass., in which Mrs. Longfellow's grandfather lived.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.
1845 1845

THE BUILDERS

All are architects of Fate,
Working in these walls of Time;
Some with massive deeds and great,
Some with ornaments of rime.

Nothing useless is, or low;
Each thing in its place is best;
And what seems but idle show
Strengthens and supports the rest.

For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our todays and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

Truly shape and fashion these;
Leave no yawning gaps between;
Think not, because no man sees,
Such things will remain unseen.

In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part;
For the Gods see everywhere.

Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the house, where Gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

Else our lives are incomplete,
Standing in these walls of Time,
Broken stairways where the feet
Stumble as they seek to climb.

Build today, then, strong and sure,
With a firm and ample base;
And ascending and secure
Shall tomorrow find its place.

Thus alone can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky.
1846

TEGNER'S DRAPA[1]

I heard a voice that cried,
"Balder[2] the Beautiful
Is dead, is dead!"
And through the misty air
Passed like the mournful cry
Of sunward sailing cranes.

I saw the pallid corpse
Of the dead sun
Borne through the Northern sky.
Blasts from Niffelheim[3]
Lifted the sheeted mists
Around him as he passed.

And the voice forever cried,
"Balder the Beautiful
Is dead, is dead!"
And died away
Through the dreary night,
In accents of despair.

Balder the Beautiful,
God of the summer sun,
Fairest of all the Gods!
Light from his forehead beamed,
Runes were upon his tongue,
As on the warrior's sword.

All things in earth and air
Bound were by magic spell
Never to do him harm;
Even the plants and stones;
All save the mistletoe,
The sacred mistletoe!

Höder, the blind old God,
Whose feet are shod with silence,
Pierced through that gentle breast

---

[1] Tegner's Death Song or Dirge. Esaias Tegner (teng-när), 1782-1846, was an eminent Swedish poet. Longfellow translated several of his poems, *Frithiof's Saga, The Children of the Lord's Supper,* etc.

[2] The sun-god Balder (baldr, foremost), the son of Odin and Frigg, was the wisest, purest, most beautiful, and most beloved of the Scandinavian gods. Evil dreams having come to Balder, Frigg, his mother, persuaded all things on earth, vegetable, mineral, and animal, to take oath that they would not hurt him. As he was therefore believed invulnerable, the gods amused themselves by shooting at him. But Loki the evil god, discovering that the mistletoe had been too young to take the oath, made an arrow out of that plant. This, as if in sport, he helped the blind god Höder (night), Balder's brother, to aim. Höder shot and killed Balder. Great was the mourning in heaven. However, according to Scandinavian myth, Balder will return, as the sun returns in summer, to a newly created heaven and earth. Cf. Matthew Arnold's *Balder Dead* and Gray's *Th Descent of Odin.*

[3] In Norse mythology, the northern land of fog and cold.

With his sharp spear, by fraud
Made of the mistletoe,
The accursed mistletoe!

They laid him in his ship,
With horse and harness,
As on a funeral pyre.
Odin placed
A ring upon his finger,
And whispered in his ear.

They launched the burning ship!
It floated far away
Over the misty sea,
Till like the sun it seemed,
Sinking beneath the waves.
Balder returned no more!

So perish the old Gods!
But out of the sea of Time
Rises a new land of song,
Fairer than the old.
Over its meadows green
Walk the young bards and sing.

Build it again,
O ye bards,
Fairer than before!
Ye fathers of the new race,
Feed upon morning dew,
Sing the new Song of Love!

The law of force is dead!
The law of love prevails!
Thor,[4] the thunderer,
Shall rule the earth no more,
No more, with threats,
Challenge the meek Christ.

Sing no more,
O ye bards of the North,
Of Vikings and of Jarls![5]
Of the days of Eld
Preserve the freedom only,
Not the deeds of blood.

1847 1850

From EVANGELINE[1]

A TALE OF ACADIE

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,
Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,
Stand like Druids[2] of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring ocean
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that beneath it
Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice of the huntsman?
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers,—
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of heaven?
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever departed!
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of October
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o'er the ocean.
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful village of Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is patient,
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's devotion,
List to the mournful tradition, still sung by the pines of the forest;
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.

PART THE FIRST

I

In the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré

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[4] The Norse god of thunder.

[5] Scandinavian noblemen; cf. earl. Vikings were sea-rovers.

[1] In Hawthorne's *American Note-Books* occurs this passage: "H. L. C. (Reverend H. L. Conolly) heard from a French Canadian a story of a young couple in Acadie. On their marriage day all the men of the Province were summoned to assemble in the church to hear a proclamation. When assembled, they were all seized and shipped off to be distributed throughout New England,—among them the new bridegroom. His bride set off in search of him—wandered about New England all her life-time, and at last, when she was old, found her bridegroom on his deathbed. The shock was so great that it killed her likewise." Since Hawthorne, however, did not wish to use the incident for a story, Longfellow asked permission to develop it. For the history of the exile of the Acadians see Bancroft's account on p. 479.

[2] The Druids or priests of the early Celts in Britain worshiped in forests.

Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the eastward,
Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without number.
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised with labor incessant,
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the flood-gates
Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er the meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards and cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and away to the northward
Blomidon[3] rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the mountains
Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty Atlantic
Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station descended.
There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.
Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of hemlock,
Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the Henries.[4]
Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows; and gables projecting
Over the basement below protected and shaded the doorway.
There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the sunset
Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the chimneys,
Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles
Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the golden
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within doors
Mingled their sound with the whir of the wheels and the songs of the maidens.
Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the children
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless them.
Reverend walked he among them; and up rose matrons and maidens,
Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.
Then came the laborers home from the field, and serenely the sun sank
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the belfry
Softly the Angelus[5] sounded, and over the roofs of the village
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending,
Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and contentment.
Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers,—
Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they free from
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of republics.
Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their windows;
But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the owners;
There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin of Minas,
Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-Pré,
Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with him, directing his household,
Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the village.
Stalwart and stately in form was the man of seventy winters;
Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-flakes;
White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.
Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers;
Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by the wayside,
Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade of her tresses!
Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the meadows.
When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noontide
Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the maiden.
Fairer was she when on Sunday morn, while the bell from its turret
Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop[6]
Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,
Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads and her missal,

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[3] Cape Blomidon, one of the northern extremities of the precipitous ridge lying along the Bay of Fundy.

[4] Probably Henry III. and Henry IV., Kings of France 1574-1610. Acadia was colonized in 1604.

[5] A bell rung at morning, noon, and night as a call to a devotion; named the Angelus in commemoration of the annunciation by the angel Gabriel, of the Incarnation.

[6] An herb, the twigs of which were used by Jewish priests in ceremonial purifications by sprinkling. In Catholic churches the holy water sprinkler.

Wearing her Norman cap and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings
Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an heirloom,
Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.
But a celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—
Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after confession,
Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.
When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the farmer
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea; and a shady
Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine wreathing around it.
Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath; and a footpath
Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the meadow.
Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a penthouse,
Such as the traveler sees in regions remote by the roadside,
Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of Mary.
Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well with its moss-grown
Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the horses.
Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the barns and the farm-yard.
There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the antique plows and the harrows;
There were the folds for the sheep; and there, in his feathered seraglio,
Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the selfsame
Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter.[7]
Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a village. In each one
Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch; and a staircase,
Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the odorous corn-loft.
There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and innocent inmates
Murmuring ever of love; while above in the variant breezes
Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of Grand-Pré
Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his household.
Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened his missal,
Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of his deepest devotion;
Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem of her garment!
Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness befriended,
And, as he knocked and waited to hear the sound of her footsteps,
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the knocker of iron;
Or, at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the village,
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he whispered
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the music.
But among all who came young Gabriel only was welcome;
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,
Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored of all men;
For, since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people.
Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from earliest childhood
Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father Felician,
Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them their letters
Out of the selfsame book, with the hymns of the church and the plain-song.[8]
But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson completed,
Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the blacksmith.
There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold him
Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything,
Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the tire of the cart-wheel
Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.
Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering darkness

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[7] *Matthew* xxvi. 74, 75.

[8] The simple liturgical music required in Catholic services.

Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every cranny and crevice,
Warm by the forge within they watched the laboring bellows,
And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in the ashes,
Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into the chapel.
Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of the eagle,
Down the hillside bounding, they glided away o'er the meadow.
Oft in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the rafters,
Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which the swallow
Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight of its fledglings;[9]
Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the swallow!
Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were children.
He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the morning,
Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into action.
She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a woman.
"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie,"[10] was she called; for that was the sunshine
Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards with apples;
She too would bring to her husband's house delight and abundance,
Filling it with love and the ruddy faces of children.

II

Now had the season returned, when the nights grow colder and longer,
And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion[11] enters.
Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air, from the ice-bound,
Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical islands.
Harvests were gathered in; and wild with the winds of September
Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old with the angel.[12]
All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement.
Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded their honey
Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian hunters asserted
Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of the foxes.
Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed that beautiful season,
Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer of All-Saints![13]
Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the landscape
Lay as if new-created in all the freshness of childhood.
Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless heart of the ocean
Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in harmony blended.
Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in the farm-yards,
Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing of pigeons,
All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love, and the great sun
Looked with the eye of love through the golden vapors around him;
While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and yellow,
Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering tree of the forest
Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned with mantles and jewels.[14]

Now recommenced the reign of rest and affection and stillness.
Day with its burden and heat had departed, and twilight descending
Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the herds to the homestead.
Pawing the ground they came, and resting their necks on each other,
And with their nostrils distended inhaling the freshness of evening.
Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer,
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that waved from her collar,
Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human affection.

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[9] "If the eyes of one of the young of a swallow be put out, the mother bird will bring from the sea-shore a little stone, which will immediately restore its sight." Pluquet, *Contes Populaires*; quoted by Wright, *Literature and Superstitions of England in the Middle Ages.*

[10] Pluquet gives the rime:

"Si le soleil rit le jour Sainte Eulalie
Il y aura pommes et cidre à folie."

i. e., "If the sun laughs on Saint Eulalia's day
There will be apples and cider a-plenty."

[11] The eighth of the signs of the zodiac, that which the sun enters Oct. 20.

[12] *Genesis* xxxii. 24-30.

[13] About the first of November, that day being All Saints' Day. Corresponding to our Indian summer.

[14] Xerxes found a plane tree so beautiful that he "presented it with golden ornaments" and put it in the care of a soldier of his chosen legion. See Herodotus vii. 31.

Then came the shepherd back with his bleating flocks from the seaside,
Where was their favorite pasture. Behind them followed the watch-dog,
Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride of his instinct,
Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and superbly
Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the stragglers;
Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept; their protector,
When from the forest at night, through the starry silence, the wolves howled.
Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains from the marshes,
Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its odor.
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their manes and their fetlocks,
While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and ponderous saddles,
Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with tassels of crimson,
Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with blossoms.
Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded their udders
Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud and in regular cadence
Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets descended.
Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were heard in the farm-yard,
Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into stillness;
Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of the barn-doors,
Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was silent.

In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fireplace, idly the farmer
Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the flames and the smoke-wreaths
Struggled together like foes in a burning city. Behind him,
Nodding and mocking along the wall, with gestures fantastic,
Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away into darkness.
Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his arm-chair
Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter plates on the dresser
Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies the sunshine.
Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of Christmas,
Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers before him
Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Burgundian vineyards.
Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline seated,
Spinning flax for the loom that stood in the corner behind her.
Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its diligent shuttle,
While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the drone of a bagpipe,
Followed the old man's song, and united the fragments together.
As in a church, when the chant of the choir at intervals ceases,
Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the priest at the altar,
So, in each pause of the song, with measured motion the clock clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard, and, suddenly lifted,
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung back on its hinges.
Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil the blacksmith,
And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who was with him.
"Welcome!" the farmer exclaimed, as their footsteps paused on the threshold,
"Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy place on the settle
Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty without thee;
Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box of tobacco;
Never so much thyself art thou as when, through the curling
Smoke of the pipe or the forge, thy friendly and jovial face gleams
Round and red as the harvest moon through the mist of the marshes."
Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil the blacksmith,
Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the fireside:—
"Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest and thy ballad!
Ever in cheerfullest mood art thou, when others are filled with
Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before them.
Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked up a horseshoe."
Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline brought him,
And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he slowly continued:—

"Four days now are passed since the English ships at their anchors
Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their cannon pointed against us.
What their design may be is unknown; but all are commanded
On the morrow to meet in the church, where his Majesty's mandate
Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas! in the mean time
Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the people."
Then made answer the farmer:—"Perhaps some friendlier purpose
Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the harvests in England
By untimely rains or untimelier heat have been blighted,
And from our bursting barns they would feed their cattle and children."
"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said warmly the blacksmith,
Shaking his head as in doubt; then, heaving a sigh, he continued:—
"Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor Port Royal.[15]
Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its outskirts,
Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of tomorrow.
Arms have been taken from us, and warlike weapons of all kinds;
Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the scythe of the mower."
Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial farmer:—
"Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks and our cornfields,
Safer within these peaceful dikes besieged by the ocean,
Than our fathers in forts, besieged by the enemy's cannon.
Fear no evil, my friend, and tonight may no shadow of sorrow
Fall on this house and hearth; for this is the night of the contract.
Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads of the village
Strongly have built them and well; and, breaking the glebe round about them,[16]
Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food for a twelvemonth.
René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers and inkhorn.
Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy of our children?"
As apart by the window she stood, with her hand in her lover's,
Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her father had spoken,
And, as they died on his lips, the worthy notary entered.

III

Bent like a laboring oar, that toils in the surf of the ocean,
Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of the notary public;
Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the maize, hung
Over his shoulders; his forehead was high; and glasses with horn bows
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom supernal.
Father of twenty children was he, and more than a hundred
Children's children rode on his knee, and heard his great watch tick.
Four long years in the times of the war[17] had he languished a captive,
Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend of the English.
Now, though warier grown, without all guile or suspicion,
Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple, and childlike.
He was beloved by all, and most of all by the children;
For he told them tales of the Loup-garou[18] in the forest,
And of the goblin that came in the night to water the horses,
And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who unchristened
Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the chambers of children;
And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in the stable,

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[15] Louisburg, capital of Cape Breton Island, had been captured by the English in 1745 and 1758; Beau Séjour, on the neck connecting Acadia with the mainland, in 1755; and Port Royal, in Acadia, in 1690 and 1710.

[16] "As soon as a young man arrived to the proper age, the community built him a house, broke up the lands about it, and supplied him with all the necessaries of life for a twelve-month. There he received the partner whom he had chosen, and who brought him her portion in flocks." See Haliburton's *History of Nova Scotia*, I. 172.

[17] Probably King George's War, 1744-1748, between England and her colonies on the one side and France and the Indians on the other. In Europe it was known as the War of the Austrian Succession, 1741-1748.

[18] The man-wolf. Cf. *Skeleton in Armor*, n. 7, p. 594. Belief in the Létiche was perhaps based on glimpses of the white ermine. It was said that on Christmas eve the cattle knelt to worship Christ; a spider sealed up in a goose-quill and hung about a person's neck would cure the ague, etc. For these and similar beliefs see Pluquet.

And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up in a nutshell,
And of the marvelous powers of four-leaved clover and horseshoes,
With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the village.
Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the blacksmith,
Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly extending his right hand,
"Father Leblanc," he exclaimed, "thou hast heard the talk in the village,
And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these ships and their errand."
Then with modest demeanor made answer the notary public,—
"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am never the wiser;
And what their errand may be I know not better than others.
Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil intention
Brings them here, for we are at peace; and why then molest us?"
"God's name!" shouted the hasty and somewhat irascible blacksmith;
"Must we in all things look for the how, and the why, and the wherefore?
Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of the strongest!"
But, without heeding his warmth, continued the notary public,—
"Man is unjust, but God is just; and finally justice
Triumphs; and well I remember a story[19] that often consoled me,
When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at Port Royal."
This was the old man's favorite tale, and he loved to repeat it
When his neighbors complained that any injustice was done them.
"Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer remember,
Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Justice
Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in its left hand,
And in its right a sword, as an emblem that justice presided
Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and homes of the people.
Even the birds had built their nests in the scales of the balance,
Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the sunshine above them.
But in the course of time the laws of the land were corrupted;
Might took the place of right, and the weak were oppressed, and the mighty
Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in a nobleman's palace
That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a suspicion
Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the household.
She, after form of trial condemned to die on the scaffold,
Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of Justice.
As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit ascended,
Lo! o'er the city a tempest rose; and the bolts of the thunder
Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath from its left hand
Down on the pavement below the clattering scales of the balance,
And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a magpie,
Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls was inwoven."
Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was ended, the blacksmith
Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth no language;
All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his face, as the vapors
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the table,
Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with home-brewed
Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the village of Grand-Pré;
While from his pocket the notary drew his papers and inkhorn,
Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of the parties,
Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and in cattle.
Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well were completed,
And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on the margin.
Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on the table
Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of silver;
And the notary rising, and blessing the bride and the bridegroom,
Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their welfare.

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[19] A version of the same story is found in Rossini's opera *The Thieving Magpie,* 1817.

Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed and departed,
While in silence the others sat and mused by the fireside,
Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of its corner.
Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention the old men
Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful maneuver,
Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach was made in the king-row.
Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a window's embrasure,
Sat the lovers and whispered together, beholding the moon rise
Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the meadows.
Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon the bell from the belfry
Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and straightway
Rose the guests and departed; and silence reigned in the household.
Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the door-step
Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with gladness.
Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed on the hearth-stone,
And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the farmer.
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline followed.
Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the darkness,
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the maiden.
Silent she passed the hall, and entered the door of her chamber.
Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white, and its clothes-press
Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully folded
Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline woven.
This was the precious dower she would bring to her husband in marriage,
Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as a housewife.
Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and radiant moonlight
Streamed through the windows, and lighted the room, till the heart of the maiden
Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides of the ocean.
Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she stood with
Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her chamber!
Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of the orchard,
Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her lamp, and her shadow.
Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feeling of sadness
Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds in the moonlight
Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for a moment.
And, as she gazed from the window, she saw serenely the moon pass
Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her footsteps,
As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered with Hagar![20]

IV

Pleasantly rose next morn the sun on the village of Grand-Pré.
Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin of Minas,
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows, were riding at anchor.
Life had long been astir in the village, and clamorous labor
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates of the morning.
Now from the country around, from the farms and neighboring hamlets,
Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian peasants.
Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from the young folk
Made the bright air brighter, as up from the numerous meadows,
Where no path could be seen but the track of wheels in the greensward,
Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed on the highway.
Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labor were silenced.
Thronged were the streets with people; and noisy groups at the house-doors
Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossiped together.
Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and feasted;
For with this simple people, who lived like brothers together,
All things were held in common, and what one had was another's.

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[20] *Genesis* xxi. 14-21.

Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more abundant:
For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father;
Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome and gladness
Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the orchard,
Stript of its golden fruit, was spread the feast of betrothal.
There in the shade of the porch were the priest and the notary seated;
There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the blacksmith.
Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press and the beehives,
Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of hearts and of waistcoats.
Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played on his snow-white
Hair, as it waved in the wind; and the jolly face of the fiddler
Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown from the embers.
Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his fiddle,
Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres, and *Le Carillon de Dunkerque*.[21]
And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.
Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances
Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows;
Old folk and young together, and children mingled among them.
Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter!
Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the blacksmith!

So passed the morning away. And lo! with a summons sonorous
Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the meadows a drum beat.
Thronged ere long was the church with men. Without, in the churchyard,
Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung on the headstones
Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh from the forest.
Then came the guard from the ships, and marching proudly among them
Entered the sacred portal. With loud and dissonant clangor
Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling and casement,—
Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous portal
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of the soldiers.
Then uprose their commander, and spake from the steps of the altar,
Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal commission.
"You are convened this day," he said, "by His Majesty's orders.
Clement and kind has he been; but how you have answered his kindness
Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make and my temper
Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must be grievous.
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our monarch:
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cattle of all kinds
Forfeited be to the crown; and that you yourselves from this province
Be transported to other lands. God grant you may dwell there
Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people!
Prisoners now I declare you, for such is his Majesty's pleasure!"
As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of summer,
Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of the hailstones
Beats down the farmer's corn in the field, and shatters his windows,
Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with thatch from the house-roofs,
Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their enclosures;
So on the hearts of the people descended the words of the speaker.
Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder, and then rose
Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and anger,
And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to the doorway.
Vain was the hope of escape; and cries and fierce imprecations
Rang through the house of prayer; and high o'er the heads of the others
Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the blacksmith,
As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the billows.

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[21] *All the Citizens of Chartres;* and *The Chime of Dunkirk*—popular French songs.

Flushed was his face and distorted with passion; and wildly he shouted,—
"Down with the tyrants of England! we never have sworn them allegiance!
Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our homes and our harvests!"
More he fain would have said, but the merciless hand of a soldier
Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down to the pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry contention,
Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician
Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps of the altar.
Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into silence
All that clamorous throng; and thus he spake to his people;
Deep were his tones and solemn; in accents measured and mournful
Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly the clock strikes.
"What is this that ye do, my children? what madness has seized you?
Forty years of my life have I labored among you, and taught you,
Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another!
Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers and privations?
Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and forgiveness?
This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would you profane it
Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with hatred?
Lo! where the crucified Christ from his cross is gazing upon you!
See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and holy compassion!
Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer, 'O Father, forgive them!'
Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked assail us,
Let us repeat it now, and say, 'O Father, forgive them!'"[22]
Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his people
Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded the passionate outbreak,
While they repeated his prayer, and said, "O Father, forgive them!"

Then came the evening service. The tapers gleamed from the altar;
Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest, and the people responded,
Not with their lips alone, but their hearts; and the Ave Maria
Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their souls, with devotion translated,
Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah ascending to heaven.[23]

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings of ill, and on all sides
Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women and children.
Long at her father's door Evangeline stood, with her right hand
Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun, that, descending,
Lighted the village street with mysterious splendor, and roofed each
Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and emblazoned its windows.
Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth on the table;
There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey fragrant with wild flowers;
There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese fresh brought from the dairy:
And, at the head of the board, the great arm-chair of the farmer.
Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as the sunset
Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad ambrosial meadows.
Ah! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had fallen,
And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial ascended,—
Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness, and patience!
Then, all forgetful of self, she wandered into the village,
Cheering with looks and words the mournful hearts of the women,
As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps they departed,
Urged by their household cares, and the weary feet of their children.
Down sank the great red sun, and in golden, glimmering vapors
Veiled the light of his face, like the Prophet descending from Sinai.[24]
Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded.

Meanwhile amid the gloom, by the church Evangeline lingered.
All was silent within; and in vain at the door and the windows

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[22] *Luke* xxiii. 34.

[23] 2 *Kings* ii. 11.

[24] *Exodus* xxxiv. 29-35.

Stood she, and listened and looked, until, overcome by emotion,
"Gabriel!" cried she aloud with tremulous voice; but no answer
Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier grave of the living.
Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless house of her father.
Smoldered the fire on the hearth, on the board was the supper untasted.
Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with phantoms of terror.
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of her chamber.
In the dead of the night she heard the disconsolate rain fall
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-tree by the window.
Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of the echoing thunder
Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the world he created!
Then she remembered the tale she had heard of the justice of Heaven;
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully slumbered till morning.

V

Four times the sun had risen and set; and now on the fifth day
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of the farm-house.
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful procession,
Came from the neighboring hamlets and farms the Acadian women,
Driving in ponderous wains their household goods to the seashore,
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on their dwellings,
Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road and the woodland.
Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on the oxen,
While in their little hands they clasped some fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried; and there on the sea-beach
Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the peasants.
All day long between the shore and the ships did the boats ply;
All day long the wains came laboring down from the village.
Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his setting,
Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from the churchyard.
Thither the women and children thronged. On a sudden the church-doors
Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in gloomy procession
Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers.
Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes and their country,
Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary and wayworn,
So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants descended
Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives and their daughters.
Foremost the young men came; and, raising together their voices,
Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic Missions:—
"Sacred heart of the Saviour! O inexhaustible fountain!
Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission and patience!"
Then the old men, as they marched, and the women that stood by the wayside
Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sunshine above them
Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,
Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction,—
Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession approached her,
And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.
Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him,
Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and whispered,—
"Gabriel, be of good cheer! for if we love one another,
Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may happen!"
Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused, for her father
Saw she, slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was his aspect!
Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his eye, and his footstep
Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy heart in his bosom.
But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and embraced him,
Speaking words of endearment where words of comfort availed not.
Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of embarking.
Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the confusion
Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too late, saw their children
Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest entreaties.
So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried,
While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood with her father.
Half the task was not done when the sun went down, and the twilight
Deepened and darkened around; and in haste the refluent ocean
Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the sand-beach
Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the slippery seaweed.
Farther back in the midst of the household goods and the wagons,
Like to a gypsy camp, or a leaguer[25] after a battle,
All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near them,
Lay encamped for the night the houseless Acadian farmers.
Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellowing ocean,
Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and leaving
Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of the sailors.
Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from their pastures;
Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of milk from their udders;
Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars of the farm-yard,—
Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the milkmaid.
Silence reigned in the streets; from the church no Angelus sounded,
Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no lights from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires had been kindled,
Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from wrecks in the tempest.
Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces were gathered,
Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the crying of children.
Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth in his parish,
Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing and cheering,
Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate seashore.[26]
Thus he approached the place where Evangeline sat with her father,
And in the flickering light beheld the face of the old man,
Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either thought or emotion,
E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands have been taken.
Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses to cheer him,
Vainly offered him food; yet he moved not, he looked not, he spake not,
But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering fire-light.
"Benedicite!"[27] murmured the priest, in tones of compassion.
More he fain would have said, but his heart was full, and his accents
Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a child on a threshold,
Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful presence of sorrow.
Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of the maiden,
Raising his tearful eyes to the silent stars that above them
Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs and sorrows of mortals.
Then sat he down at her side, and they wept together in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn the blood-red
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er the horizon
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands[28] upon mountain and meadow,
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge shadows together.
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs of the village,
Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships that lay in the roadstead.
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of flame were
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the quivering hands of a martyr.
Then as the wind seized the gleeds[29] and the burning thatch, and, uplifting,

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[25] camp

[26] *Acts* xxviii. 1-10.

[27] Blessing upon you.

[28] The Titans, here apparently somewhat confused with their hundred-handed brothers, the Uranids, of whom Briareus was one of the chief, represent convulsive forces of nature.

[29] burning coals

Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a hundred house-tops
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the shore and on shipboard.
Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in their anguish,
"We shall behold no more our homes in the village of Grand-Pré!"
Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow in the farm-yards,
Thinking the day had dawned; and anon the lowing of cattle
Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of dogs interrupted.
Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the sleeping encampments
Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the Nebraska,
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the speed of the whirlwind,
Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to the river.
Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the herds and the horses
Broke through their folds and fences, and madly rushed o'er the meadows.

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the priest and the maiden
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and widened before them;
And as they turned at length to speak to their silent companion,
Lo! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched abroad on the seashore
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had departed.
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the maiden
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her terror.
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head on his bosom.
Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious slumber;
And when she woke from the trance, she beheld a multitude near her.
Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully gazing upon her,
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest compassion.
Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the landscape,
Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the faces around her,
And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering senses.
Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the people,—
"Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier season
Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land of our exile,
Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the churchyard."
Such were the words of the priest. And there in haste by the seaside,
Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,
But without bell or book,[30] they buried the farmer of Grand-Pré.
And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,
Lo! with a mournful sound like the voice of a vast congregation,
Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the dirges.
'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the ocean,
With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying landward.
Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking;
And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed out of the harbor,
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village in ruins.

1845-1847 1847

[End of Part the First]

THE SECRET OF THE SEA[1]

Ah! what pleasant visions haunt me
As I gaze upon the sea!
All the old romantic legends,
All my dreams, come back to me.

Sails of silk and ropes of sendal,[2]
Such as gleam in ancient lore;
And the singing of the sailors,
And the answer from the shore!

Most of all, the Spanish ballad
Haunts me oft, and tarries long,
Of the noble Count Arnaldos
And the sailor's mystic song.

Like the long waves on a sea-beach,
Where the sand as silver shines,

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[30] without religious ceremony

[1] This poem is based upon and in places is almost a literal translation of a Spanish ballad, the *Romance del Conde Arnaldo.* It may be found in *Primavera y Flor de Romance* collected by Wolf and Hofman, 1856.

[2] A kind of thin silk material.

With a soft, monotonous cadence,
  Flow its unrimed lyric lines;—

Telling how the Count Arnaldos,
  With his hawk upon his hand,
Saw a fair and stately galley,
  Steering onward to the land;—

How he heard the ancient helmsman
  Chant a song so wild and clear,
That the sailing sea-bird slowly
  Poised upon the mast to hear,

Till his soul was full of longing,
  And he cried, with impulse strong,—
"Helmsman! for the love of heaven,
  Teach me, too, that wondrous song!"

"Wouldst thou,"—so the helmsman answered,
  "Learn the secret of the sea?
Only those who brave its dangers
  Comprehend its mystery!"

In each sail that skims the horizon,
  In each landward-blowing breeze,
I behold that stately galley,
  Hear those mournful melodies;

Till my soul is full of longing
  For the secret of the sea,
And the heart of the great ocean
  Sends a thrilling pulse through me

1848

SIR HUMPHREY GILBERT[1]

Southward with fleet of ice
  Sailed the corsair Death;
Wild and fast blew the blast,
  And the east-wind was his breath.

His lordly ships of ice
  Glistened in the sun;
On each side, like pennons wide,
  Flashing crystal streamlets run.

His sails of white sea-mist
  Dripped with silver rain;
But where he passed there were cast
  Leaden shadows o'er the main.

Eastward from Campobello[2]
  Sir Humphrey Gilbert sailed;
Three days or more seaward he bore,
  Then, alas! the land-wind failed.

Alas! the land-wind failed,
  And ice-cold grew the night;
And never more, on sea or shore,
  Should Sir Humphrey see the light.

He sat upon the deck,
  The Book was in his hand;
"Do not fear! Heaven is as near,"
  He said, "by water as by land!"

In the first watch of the night,
  Without a signal's sound,
Out of the sea, mysteriously,
  The fleet of Death rose all around.

The moon and the evening star
  Were hanging in the shrouds;
Every mast, as it passed,
  Seemed to rake the passing clouds.

They grappled with their prize,
  At midnight black and cold!
As of a rock was the shock;
  Heavily the ground-swell rolled.

Southward through day and dark,
  They drift in close embrace,
With mist and rain, to the Spanish Main;[3]
  Yet there seems no change of place.

Southward, forever southward,
  They drift through dark and day;
And like a dream, in the Gulf-Stream
  Sinking, vanish all away.

1848 1848

RESIGNATION[1]

There is no flock, however watched and tended,
  But one dead lamb is there!
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
  But has one vacant chair!

---

[1] An English adventurer, a half brother of Sir Walter Raleigh. He established the first English colony in North America at St. Johns, Newfoundland, where he landed Aug. 5, 1583. On his return to England, after disastrous experiences, he was one tempestuous day seen by those of an accompanying vessel, the *Golden Hind,* sitting at the stern of his little pinnace of ten tons, the *Squirrel,* reading a book, and as often as the two ships drew near was heard to exclaim, "We are as near heaven by sea as by land." That night, Sept. 9, 1583, the lights of the *Squirrel* suddenly disappeared and no trace of the vessel was ever found. See Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, and Discoveries of the English Nation,* vol. viii. p. 174. Edinburgh, 1904. Hakluyt makes no suggestion of the ice as incidental to the disaster.

[2] Campobello Island, probably mentioned because of its musical name, is in the Bay of Fundy.

[3] The seas north of South America.

[1] Written after the death of his little daughter Fanny.

The air is full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted![2]

Let us be patient! These severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise,
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

We see but dimly through the mists and vapors;
Amid these earthly damps
What seem to us but sad, funereal tapers
May be heaven's distant lamps.

There is no Death! What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call Death.

She is not dead,—the child of our affection,—
But gone unto that school
Where she no longer needs our poor protection,
And Christ himself doth rule.

In that great cloister's stillness and seclusion,
By guardian angels led,
Safe from temptation, safe from sin's pollution,
She lives, whom we call dead.

Day after day we think what she is doing
In those bright realms of air;
Year after year, her tender steps pursuing,
Behold her grown more fair.

Thus do we walk with her, and keep unbroken
The bond which nature gives,
Thinking that our remembrance, though unspoken,
May reach her where she lives.

Not as a child shall we again behold her;
For when with raptures wild
In our embraces we again enfold her,
She will not be a child;

But a fair maiden, in her Father's mansion,[3]
Clothed with celestial grace;
And beautiful with all the soul's expansion
Shall we behold her face.

And though at times impetuous with emotion
And anguish long suppressed,
The swelling heart heaves moaning like the ocean,
That cannot be at rest,—

We will be patient, and assuage the feeling
We may not wholly stay;
By silence sanctifying, not concealing,
The grief that must have way.

1848

KING WITLAF'S DRINKING HORN

Witlaf,[1] a king of the Saxons,
Ere yet his last he breathed,
To the merry monks of Croyland
His drinking-horn bequeathed,—

That, whenever they sat at their revels
And drank from the golden bowl,
They might remember the donor,
And breathe a prayer for his soul.

So sat they once at Christmas,
And bade the goblet pass;
In their beards the red wine glistened
Like dew-drops in the grass.

They drank to the soul of Witlaf,
They drank to Christ the Lord,
And to each of the Twelve Apostles,
Who had preached his holy word.

They drank to the Saints and Martyrs
Of the dismal days of yore,
And as soon as the horn was empty
They remembered one Saint more.

And the reader droned from the pulpit,
Like the murmur of many bees,
The legend of good Saint Guthlac,[2]
And Saint Basil's[3] homilies;

Till the great bells of the convent,
From their prison in the tower,

---

[2] *Jeremiah* xxxi. 15.
[3] *John* xiv. 2.

[1] Witlaf, King of Mercia, once took refuge for four months at the Abbey of Croyland, which he rewarded with gifts and privileges. In his will was found this bequest: "I also offer to the refectory . . . the horn of my table, that the elders of the monastery may drink out of it on the festivals of the saints; and may sometimes amid their benedictions remember the soul of the donor, Witlaf."
[2] Saint Guthlac the English hermit, 673?-714, died at Croyland, where he had lived for fifteen years.
[3] One of the early fathers of the Greek Church.

Guthlac and Bartholomaeus,[4]
Proclaimed the midnight hour.

And the Yule-log cracked in the chimney,
And the Abbot bowed his head,
And the flamelets flapped and flickered,
But the Abbot was stark and dead.

Yet still in his pallid fingers
He clutched the golden bowl,
In which, like a pearl dissolving,
Had sunk and dissolved his soul.

But not for this their revels
The jovial monks forbore,
For they cried, "Fill high the goblet!
We must drink to one Saint more!"

1848

THE BUILDING OF THE SHIP[1]

"Build me straight, O worthy Master!
Stanch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!"

The merchant's word
Delighted the Master heard;
For his heart was in his work, and the heart
Giveth grace unto every Art.
A quiet smile played round his lips,
As the eddies and dimples of the tide
Play round the bows of ships,
That steadily at anchor ride.
And with a voice that was full of glee,
He answered, "Ere long we will launch
A vessel as goodly, and strong, and stanch,
As ever weathered a wintry sea!"

And first with nicest skill and art,
Perfect and finished in every part,
A little model the Master wrought,
Which should be to the larger plan
What the child is to the man,
Its counterpart in miniature;
That with a hand more swift and sure
The greater labor might be brought
To answer to his inward thought.
And as he labored, his mind ran o'er
The various ships that were built of yore,
And above them all, and strangest of all,
Towered the Great Harry,[2] crank and tall,
Whose picture was hanging on the wall,
With bows and stern raised high in air,
And balconies hanging here and there,
And signal lanterns and flags afloat,
And eight round towers, like those that frown
From some old castle, looking down
Upon the drawbridge and the moat.
And he said, with a smile, "Our ship, I wis,
Shall be of another form than this!"

It was of another form, indeed;
Built for freight, and yet for speed,
A beautiful and gallant craft;
Broad in the beam, that the stress of the blast,
Pressing down upon sail and mast,
Might not the sharp bows overwhelm;
Broad in the beam, but sloping aft
With graceful curve and slow degrees,
That she might be docile to the helm,
And that the currents of parted seas,
Closing behind, with mighty force,
Might aid and not impede her course.

In the ship-yard stood the Master,
With the model of the vessel
That should laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!

Covering many a rood of ground,
Lay the timber piled around;
Timber of chestnut, and elm, and oak,
And scattered here and there, with these,
The knarred and crooked cedar knees;
Brought from regions far away,
From Pascagoula's sunny bay,[3]
And the banks of the roaring Roanoke![4]
Ah! what a wondrous thing it is
To note how many wheels of toil
One thought, one word, can set in motion!
There's not a ship that sails the ocean,
But every climate, every soil,
Must bring its tribute, great or small,
And help to build the wooden wall![5]

The sun was rising o'er the sea,
And long the level shadows lay,
As if they, too, the beams would be
Of some great, airy argosy,[6]
Framed and launched in a single day.

---

[4] Bartholomew, one of the twelve apostles.

[1] This poem is comparable with Schiller's *Song of the Bell*, in which the changes of meter are adapted to the changes in thought. Note the occasional use of the meter which Longfellow later use in *Hiawatha*.

[2] An English man-of-war built in 1488 and then considered very great, though of but 1000 tons.

[3] On the southern coast of Mississippi.

[4] In North Carolina.

[5] The answer of the Delphic oracle to the Greeks who asked how they were to meet Xerxes was:
"Zeus the sire of all
Hath safety promised in a wooden wall."
Accordingly, by using well their ships th Greeks overthrew the Persians in the nava battle of Salamis.

[6] A richly laden merchant vessel.

That silent architect, the sun,
Had hewn and laid them every one,
Ere the work of man was yet begun.
Beside the Master, when he spoke,
A youth, against an anchor leaning,
Listened, to catch his slightest meaning.
Only the long waves, as they broke
In ripples on the pebbly beach,
Interrupted the old man's speech.

Beautiful they were, in sooth,
The old man and the fiery youth!
The old man, in whose busy brain
Many a ship that sailed the main
Was modeled o'er and o'er again;—
The fiery youth, who was to be
The heir of his dexterity,
The heir of his house, and his daughter's hand,
When he had built and launched from land
What the elder head had planned.

"Thus," said he, "will we build this ship!
Lay square the blocks upon the slip,[7]
And follow well this plan of mine.
Choose the timbers with greatest care;
Of all that is unsound beware;
For only what is sound and strong
To this vessel shall belong.
Cedar of Maine and Georgia pine
Here together shall combine.
A goodly frame, and a goodly fame,
And the UNION[8] be her name!
For the day that gives her to the sea
Shall give my daughter unto thee!"

The Master's word
Enraptured the young man heard;
And as he turned his face aside,
With a look of joy and a thrill of pride,
Standing before
Her father's door,
He saw the form of his promised bride.
The sun shone on her golden hair,
And her cheek was glowing fresh and fair,
With the breath of morn and the soft sea air,
Like a beauteous barge was she,
Still at rest on the sandy beach,
Just beyond the billow's reach;
But he
Was the restless, seething, stormy sea!

Ah, how skilful grows the hand
That obeyeth Love's command!
It is the heart, and not the brain,
That to the highest doth attain,
And he who followeth Love's behest
Far excelleth all the rest!

Thus with the rising of the sun
Was the noble task begun,
And soon throughout the ship-yard's bounds
Were heard the intermingled sounds
Of axes and of mallets, plied
With vigorous arms on every side;
Plied so deftly and so well,
That, ere the shadows of evening fell,
The keel of oak for a noble ship,
Scarfed[9] and bolted, straight and strong,
Was lying ready, and stretched along
The blocks, well placed upon the slip.
Happy, thrice happy, every one
Who sees his labor well begun,
And not perplexed and multiplied,
By idly waiting for time and tide!

And when the hot, long day was o'er,
The young man at the Master's door
Sat with the maiden calm and still.
And, within the porch, a little more
Removed beyond the evening chill,
The father sat, and told them tales
Of wrecks in the great September gales,[10]
Of pirates upon the Spanish Main,[11]
And ships that never came back again,
The chance and change of a sailor's life,
Want and plenty, rest and strife,
His roving fancy, like the wind,
That nothing can stay and nothing can bind,
And the magic charm of foreign lands,
With shadows of palms, and shining sands,
Where the tumbling surf,
O'er the coral reefs of Madagascar,
Washes the feet of the swarthy Lascar,[12]
As he lies alone and asleep on the turf.
And the trembling maiden held her breath
At the tales of that awful, pitiless sea,
With all its terror and mystery,
The dim, dark sea, so like unto Death,
That divides and yet unites mankind!
And whenever the old man paused, a gleam
From the bowl of his pipe would awhile illume
The silent group in the twilight gloom,
And thoughtful faces, as in a dream;
And for a moment one might mark
What had been hidden by the dark,
That the head of the maiden lay at rest,
Tenderly, on the young man's breast!

---

[7] An inclined plane on which a vessel is built or repaired.

[8] The poem was written during the great secession agitation.

[9] spliced lengthwise

[10] A great gale in 1815 was long known as the great September gale.

[11] The waters north of South America.

[12] An East Indian sailor.

Day by day the vessel grew,
With timbers fashioned strong and true,
Stemson and keelson and sternson-knee,[13]
Till, framed with perfect symmetry,
A skeleton ship rose up to view!
And around the bows and along the side
The heavy hammers and mallets plied,
Till after many a week, at length,
Wonderful for form and strength,
Sublime in its enormous bulk,
Loomed aloft the shadowy hulk!
And around it columns of smoke, up-wreathing,
Rose from the boiling, bubbling, seething
Caldron, that glowed,
And overflowed
With the black tar, heated for the sheathing.
And amid the clamors
Of clattering hammers,
He who listened heard now and then
The song of the Master and his men:—

"Build me straight, O worthy Master,
Stanch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle!"

With oaken brace and copper band,
Lay the rudder on the sand,
That, like a thought, should have control
Over the movement of the whole;
And near it the anchor, whose giant hand
Would reach down and grapple with the land,
And immovable and fast
Hold the great ship against the bellowing blast!
And at the bows an image stood,
By a cunning artist carved in wood,
With robes of white, that far behind
Seemed to be fluttering in the wind.
It was not shaped in a classic mold,
Not like a nymph or Goddess of old,
Or naiad[14] rising from the water,
But modeled from the Master's daughter!
On many a dreary and misty night,
'Twill be seen by the rays of the signal light,
Speeding along through the rain and the dark,
Like a ghost in its snow-white sark,[15]
The pilot of some phantom bark,
Guiding the vessel, in its flight,
By a path none other knows aright!

Behold, at last,
Each tall and tapering mast
Is swung into its place;
Shrouds and stays
Holding it firm and fast!

Long ago,
In the deer-haunted forests of Maine,
When upon mountain and plain
Lay the snow,
They fell,—those lordly pines!
Those grand, majestic pines!
'Mid shouts and cheers
The jaded steers,
Panting beneath the goad,
Dragged down the weary, winding road
Those captive kings so straight and tall,
To be shorn of their streaming hair,
And, naked and bare,
To feel the stress and the strain
Of the wind and the reeling main,
Whose roar
Would remind them forevermore
Of their native forests they should not see again.

And everywhere
The slender, graceful spars
Poise aloft in the air,
And at the masthead,
White, blue, and red,
A flag unrolls the stripes and stars.
Ah! when the wanderer, lonely, friendless,
In foreign harbors shall behold
That flag unrolled,
'Twill be as a friendly hand
Stretched out from his native land,
Filling his heart with memories sweet and endless.

All is finished! and at length
Has come the bridal day
Of beauty and of strength.
Today the vessel shall be launched!
With fleecy clouds the sky is blanched,
And o'er the bay,
Slowly, in all his splendors dight,
The great sun rises to behold the sight.

The ocean old,
Centuries old,
Strong as youth, and as uncontrolled,
Paces restless to and fro,
Up and down the sands of gold.
His beating heart is not at rest;
And far and wide,
With ceaseless flow,
His beard of snow
Heaves with the heaving of his breast

He waits impatient for his bride.
There she stands,

---

[13] Bracings at the stern of a wooden ship's hull.
[14] sea nymph
[15] shirt

With her foot upon the sands,
Decked with flags and streamers gay,
In honor of her marriage day,
Her snow-white signals fluttering, blending,
Round her like a veil descending,
Ready to be
The bride of the gray, old sea.

On the deck another bride
Is standing by her lover's side.
Shadows from the flags and shrouds,
Like the shadows cast by clouds,
Broken by many a sunny fleck,
Fall around them on the deck.

The prayer is said,
The service read,
The joyous bridegroom bows his head;
And in tears the good old Master
Shakes the brown hand of his son,
Kisses his daughter's glowing cheek
In silence, for he cannot speak,
And ever faster
Down his own the tears begin to run.
The worthy pastor—
The shepherd of that wandering flock,
That has the ocean for its wold,
That has the vessel for its fold,
Leaping ever from rock to rock—
Spake, with accents mild and clear,
Words of warning, words of cheer,
But tedious to the bridegroom's ear.
He knew the chart
Of the sailor's heart,
All its pleasures and its griefs,
All its shallows and rocky reefs,
All those secret currents, that flow
With such resistless undertow,
And lift and drift, with terrible force,
The will from its moorings and its course.
Therefore he spake, and thus said he:—
"Like unto ships far off at sea,
Outward or homeward bound are we.
Before, behind, and all around,
Floats and swings the horizon's bound,
Seems at its distant rim to rise
And climb the crystal wall of the skies,
And then again to turn and sink,
As if we could slide from its outer brink.
Ah! it is not the sea,
It is not the sea that sinks and shelves,
But ourselves
That rock and rise
With endless and uneasy motion,
Now touching the very skies,
Now sinking into the depths of ocean.
Ah! if our souls but poise and swing
Like the compass in its brazen ring,
Ever level and ever true
To the toil and the task we have to do,
We shall sail securely, and safely reach
The Fortunate Isles,[16] on whose shining beach
The sights we see, and the sounds we hear,
Will be those of joy and not of fear!"

Then the Master,
With a gesture of command,
Waved his hand;
And at the word,
Loud and sudden there was heard,
All around them and below,
The sound of hammers, blow on blow,
Knocking away the shores and spurs.
And see! she stirs!
She starts,—she moves,—she seems to feel
The thrill of life along her keel,
And, spurning with her foot the ground,
With one exulting, joyous bound,
She leaps into the ocean's arms!

And lo! from the assembled crowd
There rose a shout, prolonged and loud,
That to the ocean seemed to say,
"Take her, Oh bridegroom, old and gray,
Take her to thy protecting arms,
With all her youth and all her charms!"

How beautiful she is! How fair
She lies within those arms, that press
Her form with many a soft caress
Of tenderness and watchful care!
Sail forth into the sea, O ship!
Through wind and wave, right onward steer!
The moistened eye, the trembling lip,
Are not the signs of doubt or fear.

Sail forth into the sea of life,
O gentle, loving, trusting wife,
And safe from all adversity
Upon the bosom of that sea
Thy comings and thy goings be!
For gentleness and love and trust
Prevail o'er angry wave and gust;
And in the wreck of noble lives
Something immortal still survives!

Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!
Sail on, O UNION, strong and great!
Humanity with all its fears,
With all the hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
We know what Master laid thy keel,
What Workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,

---

[16] Or Isles of the Blest—the last home of the favorites of the gods. See note 6, p. 581.

Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge, and what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!
Fear not each sudden sound and shock,
'Tis of the wave and not the rock;
'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
And not a rent made by the gale!
In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee,—are all with thee!
1849 1849

CHILDREN

Come to me, O ye children!
For I hear you at your play,
And the questions that perplexed me
Have vanished quite away.

Ye open the eastern windows,
That look towards the sun,
Where thoughts are singing swallows,
And the brooks of morning run.

In your hearts are the birds and the sunshine,
In your thoughts the brooklet's flow,
But in mine is the wind of Autumn
And the first fall of the snow.

Ah! what would the world be to us
If the children were no more?
We should dread the desert behind us
Worse than the dark before.

What the leaves are to the forest,
With light and air for food,
Ere their sweet and tender juices
Have been hardened into wood,—

That to the world are children;
Through them it feels the glow
Of a brighter and sunnier climate
Than reaches the trunks below.

Come to me, O ye children!
And whisper in my ear
What the birds and the winds are singing
In your sunny atmosphere.

For what are all our contrivings,
And the wisdom of our books,
When compared with your caresses,
And the gladness of your looks?

Ye are better than all the ballads
That ever were sung or said;
For ye are living poems,
And all the rest are dead.
1849

THE LADDER OF SAINT AUGUSTINE[1]

Saint Augustine! well hast thou said,
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame!

All common things, each day's events,
That with the hour begin and end,
Our pleasures and our discontents,
Are rounds by which we may ascend.

The low desire, the base design,
That makes another's virtues less;
The revel of the ruddy wine,
And all occasions of excess;

The longing for ignoble things;
The strife for triumph more than truth;
The hardening of the heart, that brings
Irreverence for the dreams of youth;

All thoughts of ill; all evil deeds,
That have their root in thoughts of ill;
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of the nobler will;—

All these must first be trampled down
Beneath our feet, if we would gain
In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.

We have not wings, we cannot soar;
But we have feet to scale and climb
By slow degrees, by more and more,
The cloudy summits of our time.

The mighty pyramids of stone
That wedge-like cleave the desert airs,
When nearer seen, and better known,
Are but gigantic flights of stairs.

The distant mountains that uprear
Their solid bastions[2] to the skies,
Are crossed by pathways, that appear
As we to higher levels rise.

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,

---

[1] Saint Augustine (354-430) said, "*De vitiis nostris scalam nobis facimus, si vitia ipsa calcamus*"—We make a ladder for ourselves from our faults if we tread upon the faults themselves. *Sermon III. De Ascensione.*

[2] earthworks

But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night.

Standing on what too long we bore
With shoulders bent and downcast eyes,
We may discern—unseen before—
A path to higher destinies.

Nor deem the irrevocable Past,
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last
To something nobler we attain.
1850

THE WARDEN OF THE CINQUE PORTS[1]

A mist was driving down the British Channel,
The day was just begun,
And through the window-panes, on floor and panel,
Streamed the red autumn sun.

It glanced on flowing flag and rippling pennon,
And the white sails of ships;
And from the frowning rampart, the black cannon
Hailed it with feverish lips.

Sandwich and Romney, Hastings, Hithe, and Dover
Were all alert that day,
To see the French war-steamers speeding over,[2]
When the fog cleared away.

Sullen and silent, and like couchant lions,
Their cannon, through the night,
Holding their breath, had watched, in grim defiance,
The sea-coast opposite.

And now they roared at drum-beat from their stations
On every citadel;
Each answering each, with morning salutations,
That all was well.

And down the coast, all taking up the burden,
Replied the distant forts,
As if to summon from his sleep the Warden
And Lord of the Cinque Ports.

Him shall no sunshine from the fields of azure,
No drum-beat from the wall,
No morning gun from the black fort's embrasure,
Awaken with its call!

No more, surveying with an eye impartial
The long line of the coast,
Shall the gaunt figure of the old Field Marshal
Be seen upon his post!

For in the night, unseen, a single warrior,
In somber harness mailed,
Dreaded of man, and surnamed the Destroyer,
The rampart wall had scaled.

He passed into the chamber of the sleeper,
The dark and silent room,
And as he entered, darker grew, and deeper,
The silence and the gloom.

He did not pause to parley or dissemble,
But smote the Warden hoar;
Ah! what a blow! that made all England tremble
And groan from shore to shore.

Meanwhile, without, the surly cannon waited,
The sun rose bright o'erhead;
Nothing in Nature's aspect intimated
That a great man was dead.
1852 1853

From THE SONG OF HIAWATHA[1]

INTRODUCTION

Should you ask me, whence these stories?
Whence these legends and traditions,
With the odors of the forest,
With the dew and damp of meadows,

---

[1] This poem was written in October, 1852, in honor of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington, England's great general, who had died Sept. 14th, and who in 1829 had been given the very honorable title of Warden of the Cinque (Fr. five) Ports—the ports mentioned in the third stanza. These had once, because of their strength in ships, been considered the defense of England from continental invasion.

[2] Out of respect to the memory of Wellington.

[1] Longfellow in a note that accompanied the poem wrote: "This Indian Edda—if I may so call it—is founded on a tradition prevalent among the North American Indians, of a personage of miraculous birth, who was sent among them to clear their rivers, forests, and fishing grounds, and to teach them the arts of peace. He was known among the different tribes by the several names of Michabou, Chiabo, Manabozo, Tarenyawagon, and Hiawatha. . . . Into this old tradition I have woven other curious Indian legends, drawn chiefly from the various and valuable

With the curling smoke of wigwams,
With the rushing of great rivers,
With their frequent repetitions,
And their wild reverberations,
As of thunder in the mountains?
I should answer, I should tell you,
"From the forests and the prairies,
From the great lakes of the Northland,
From the land of the Ojibways,[2]
From the land of the Dacotahs,[3]
From the mountains, moors, and fenlands,
Where the heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
Feeds among the reeds and rushes.
I repeat them as I heard them
From the lips of Nawadaha
The musician, the sweet singer."
Should you ask where Nawadaha
Found these songs so wild and wayward,
Found these legends and traditions,
I should answer, I should tell you,
"In the birds'-nests of the forest,
In the lodges of the beaver,
In the hoof-prints of the bison,
In the eyry of the eagle!
"All the wild-fowl sang them to him,
In the moorlands and the fenlands,
In the melancholy marshes;
Chetowaik, the plover, sang them,
Mahng, the loon, the wild-goose, Wawa,
The blue heron, the Shuh-shuh-gah,
And the grouse, the Mushkodasa!"
If still further you should ask me,
Saying, "Who was Nawadaha?
Tell us of this Nawadaha,"
I should answer your inquiries
Straightway in such words as follow.
"In the vale of Tawasentha,[4]
In the green and silent valley,
By the pleasant water-courses,
Dwelt the singer Nawadaha.
Round about the Indian village
Spread the meadows and the corn-fields,
And beyond them stood the forest,
Stood the groves of singing pine-trees,
Green in summer, white in winter,
Ever sighing, ever singing.
"And the pleasant water-courses,
You could trace them through the valley,
By the rushing in the spring-time,
By the alders in the summer,
By the white fog in the autumn,
By the black line in the winter;
And beside them dwelt the singer,
In the vale of Tawasentha,
In the green and silent valley.
"There he sang of Hiawatha,
Sang the Song of Hiawatha,
Sang his wondrous birth and being,
How he prayed and how he fasted,
How he lived, and toiled, and suffered,
That the tribes of men might prosper,
That he might advance his people!"
Ye who love the haunts of nature,
Love the sunshine of the meadow,
Love the shadow of the forest,
Love the wind among the branches,
And the rain-shower and the snow-storm,
And the rushing of great rivers
Through their palisades of pine-trees,
And the thunder in the mountains,
Whose innumerable echoes
Flap like eagles in their eyries;—
Listen to these wild traditions,
To this Song of Hiawatha!
Ye who love a nation's legends,
Love the ballads of a people,
That like voices from afar off
Call to us to pause and listen,
Speak in tones so plain and childlike,
Scarcely can the ear distinguish
Whether they are sung or spoken;—
Listen to this Indian Legend,
To this Song of Hiawatha!
Ye whose hearts are fresh and simple,
Who have faith in God and Nature,
Who believe, that in all ages
Every human heart is human,
That in even savage bosoms
There are longings, yearnings, strivings
For the good they comprehend not,
That the feeble hands and helpless,
Groping blindly in the darkness,
Touch God's right hand in that darkness
And are lifted up and strengthened;—
Listen to this simple story,
To this Song of Hiawatha!
Ye, who sometimes in your rambles
Through the green lanes of the country,
Where the tangled barberry-bushes
Hang their tufts of crimson berries
Over stone walls gray with mosses,
Pause by some neglected graveyard,
For a while to muse, and ponder
On a half-effaced inscription,
Written with little skill of song-craft,
Homely phrases, but each letter
Full of hope and yet of heart-break,
Full of all the tender pathos

---

writings of Mr. Schoolcraft, to whom the literary world is greatly indebted for his indefatigable zeal in rescuing from oblivion so much of the legendary lore of the Indians." The meter was copied from that of the Finnish epic *Kalevala*.

[2] Or Chippewas, a tribe of Algonquins who lived on the south shore of Lakes Superior and Huron and in northern Minnesota and Dakota.

[3] A branch of the Sioux. They lived where now are North and South Dakota.

[4] A valley in Albany County, New York, now known as Norman's Kill.

Of the Here, and the Hereafter;—
Stay and read this rude inscription,
Read this Song of Hiawatha!

IV

HIAWATHA AND MUDJEKEEWIS[5]

Out of childhood into manhood
Now had grown my Hiawatha,
Skilled in all the craft of hunters,
Learned in all the lore of old men,
In all youthful sports and pastimes,
In all manly arts and labors.
Swift of foot was Hiawatha;
He could shoot an arrow from him,
And run forward with such fleetness,
That the arrow fell behind him!
Strong of arm was Hiawatha;
He could shoot ten arrows upward,
Shoot them with such strength and swiftness,
That the tenth had left the bow-string
Ere the first to earth had fallen!
He had mittens, Minjekahwun,
Magic mittens made of deer-skin;
When upon his hands he wore them,
He could smite the rocks asunder,
He could grind them into powder,
He had moccasins enchanted,
Magic moccasins of deer-skin;
When he bound them round his ankles,
When upon his feet he tied them,
At each stride a mile he measured!
Much he questioned old Nokomis
Of his father Mudjekeewis;
Learned from her the fatal secret
Of the beauty of his mother,
Of the falsehood of his father;
And his heart was hot within him,
Like a living coal his heart was.
Then he said to old Nokomis,
"I will go to Mudjekeewis,
See how fares it with my father,
At the doorways of the West-Wind,
At the portals of the Sunset!"
From his lodge went Hiawatha,
Dressed for travel, armed for hunting;
Dressed in deer-skin shirt and leggings,
Richly wrought with quills and wampum;[6]
On his head his eagle feathers,
Round his waist his belt of wampum,
In his hand his bow of ash-wood,
Strung with sinews of the reindeer;
In his quiver oaken arrows,
Tipped with jasper, winged with feathers;
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,
With his moccasins enchanted.
Warning said the old Nokomis,
"Go not forth, O Hiawatha!
To the kingdom of the West-Wind,
To the realms of Mudjekeewis,
Lest he harm you with his magic,
Lest he kill you with his cunning!"
But the fearless Hiawatha
Heeded not her woman's warning;
Forth he strode into the forest,
At each stride a mile he measured;
Lurid seemed the sky above him,
Lurid seemed the earth beneath him,
Hot and close the air around him,
Filled with smoke and fiery vapors,
As of burning woods and prairies,
For his heart was hot within him,
Like a living coal his heart was.
So he journeyed westward, westward,
Left the fleetest deer behind him,
Left the antelope and bison;
Crossed the rushing Esconaba,
Crossed the mighty Mississippi,
Passed the Mountains of the Prairie,
Passed the land of Crows and Foxes,
Passed the dwellings of the Blackfeet,
Came unto the Rocky Mountains,
To the kingdom of the West-Wind,
Where upon the gusty summits
Sat the ancient Mudjekeewis,
Ruler of the winds of heaven.
Filled with awe was Hiawatha
At the aspect of his father.
On the air about him wildly
Tossed and streamed his cloudy tresses,
Gleamed like drifting snow his tresses,
Glared like Ishkoodah, the comet,
Like the star with fiery tresses.
Filled with joy was Mudjekeewis
When he looked on Hiawatha,
Saw his youth rise up before him
In the face of Hiawatha,
Saw the beauty of Wenonah
From the grave rise up before him.
"Welcome!" said he, "Hiawatha,
To the kingdom of the West-Wind!
Long have I been waiting for you!
Youth is lovely, age is lonely,
Youth is fiery, age is frosty;
You bring back the days departed,
You bring back my youth of passion,
And the beautiful Wenonah!"
Many days they talked together,
Questioned, listened, waited, answered;
Much the mighty Mudjekeewis
Boasted of his ancient prowess,

[5] Hiawatha is the son of Mudjekeewis the West Wind and Wenonah, daughter of Nokomis, the child of the Moon. Wenonah, deserted by Mudjekeewis, has died of sorrow, and Hiawatha is cared for by his grandmother, near the shores of Gitche Gumee—Lake Superior.

[6] Small shells strung together like beads and used for decoration and sometimes as money.

Of his perilous adventures,
His indomitable courage,
His invulnerable body.
Patiently sat Hiawatha,
Listening to his father's boasting;
With a smile he sat and listened,
Uttered neither threat nor menace,
Neither word nor look betrayed him,
But his heart was hot within him,
Like a living coal his heart was.
Then he said, "O Mudjekeewis,
Is there nothing that can harm you?
Nothing that you are afraid of?"
And the mighty Mudjekeewis,
Grand and gracious in his boasting,
Answered, saying, "There is nothing,
Nothing but the black rock yonder,
Nothing but the fatal Wawbeek!"
And he looked at Hiawatha
With a wise look and benignant,
With a countenance paternal,
Looked with pride upon the beauty
Of his tall and graceful figure,
Saying, "O my Hiawatha!
Is there anything can harm you?
Anything you are afraid of?"
But the wary Hiawatha
Paused awhile, as if uncertain,
Held his peace, as if resolving,
And then answered, "There is nothing,
Nothing but the bulrush yonder,
Nothing but the great Apukwa!"
And as Mudjekeewis, rising,
Stretched his hand to pluck the bulrush,
Hiawatha cried in terror,
Cried in well-dissembled terror,
"Kago![7] kago! do not touch it!"
"Ah, kaween!" said Mudjekeewis,
"No indeed, I will not touch it!"
Then they talked of other matters;
First of Hiawatha's brothers,
First of Wabun, of the East-Wind,
Of the South-Wind, Shawondasee,
Of the North, Kabibonokka;
Then of Hiawatha's mother,
Of the beautiful Wenonah,
Of her birth upon the meadow,
Of her death, as old Nokomis
Had remembered and related.
And he cried, "O Mudjekeewis,
It was you who killed Wenonah,
Took her young life and her beauty,
Broke the Lily of the Prairie,
Trampled it beneath your footsteps;
You confess it! you confess it!"
And the mighty Mudjekeewis
Tossed upon the wind his tresses,
Bowed his hoary head in anguish,
With a silent nod assented.
Then up started Hiawatha,
And with threatening look and gesture
Laid his hand upon the black rock,
On the fatal Wawbeek laid it,
With his mittens, Minjekahwun,
Rent the jutting crag asunder,
Smote and crushed it into fragments,
Hurled them madly at his father,
The remorseful Mudjekeewis,
For his heart was hot within him,
Like a living coal his heart was.
But the ruler of the West-Wind,
Blew the fragments backward from him,
With the breathing of his nostrils,
With the tempest of his anger,
Blew them back at his assailant;
Seized the bulrush, the Apukwa,
Dragged it with its roots and fibers
From the margin of the meadow,
From its ooze, the giant bulrush;
Long and loud laughed Hiawatha!
Then began the deadly conflict,
Hand to hand among the mountains;
From his eyry screamed the eagle,
The Keneu, the great war-eagle,
Sat upon the crags around them,
Wheeling flapped his wings above them.
Like a tall tree in the tempest
Bent and lashed the giant bulrush;
And in masses huge and heavy
Crashing fell the fatal Wawbeek;
Till the earth shook with the tumult
And confusion of the battle,
And the air was full of shoutings,
And the thunder of the mountains,
Starting, answered, "Baim-wawa!"[8]
Back retreated Mudjekeewis,
Rushing westward o'er the mountains,
Stumbling westward down the mountains
Three whole days retreated fighting,
Still pursued by Hiawatha
To the doorways of the West-Wind,
To the portals of the Sunset,
To the earth's remotest border,
Where into the empty spaces
Sinks the sun, as a flamingo
Drops into her nest at nightfall
In the melancholy marshes.
"Hold!" at length cried Mudjekeewis,
"Hold, my son, my Hiawatha!
'Tis impossible to kill me,
For you cannot kill the immortal.
I have put you to this trial,
But to know and prove your courage;
Now receive the prize of valor!
"Go back to your home and people,

---

[7] *Kago* meant, "do not touch it"; *Kaw*, "no"; and *Kaween*, "no indeed."

[8] The sound of the thunder.

Live among them, toil among them,
Cleanse the earth from all that harms it,
Clear the fishing-grounds and rivers,
Slay all monsters and magicians,
All the Wendigoes, the giants,
All the serpents, the Kenabeeks,
As I slew the Mishe-Mokwa,
Slew the Great Bear of the mountains.
"And at last when Death draws near you,
When the awful eyes of Pauguk
Glare upon you in the darkness,
I will share my kingdom with you,
Ruler shall you be thenceforward
Of the Northwest-Wind, Keewaydin,
Of the home-wind, the Keewaydin."
Thus was fought that famous battle
In the dreadful days of Shah-shah,[9]
In the days long since departed,
In the kingdom of the West-Wind.
Still the hunter sees its traces
Scattered far o'er hill and valley;
Sees the giant bulrush growing
By the ponds and water-courses,
Sees the masses of the Wawbeek
Lying still in every valley.
Homeward now went Hiawatha;
Pleasant was the landscape round him,
Pleasant was the air above him,
For the bitterness of anger
Had departed wholly from him,
From his brain the thought of vengeance,
From his heart the burning fever.
Only once his pace he slackened,
Only once he paused or halted,
Paused to purchase heads of arrows
Of the ancient Arrow-maker,
In the land of the Dacotahs,
Where the Falls of Minnehaha[10]
Flash and gleam among the oak-trees,
Laugh and leap into the valley.
There the ancient Arrow-maker
Made his arrow-heads of sandstone,
Arrow-heads of chalcedony,
Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,
Smoothed and sharpened at the edges,
Hard and polished, keen and costly.
With him dwelt his dark-eyed daughter,
Wayward as the Minnehaha,
With her moods of shade and sunshine,
Eyes that smiled and frowned alternate,
Feet as rapid as the river,
Tresses flowing like the water,
And as musical a laughter;
And he named her from the river,
From the water-fall he named her,
Minnehaha, Laughing Water.
Was it then for heads of arrows,
Arrow-heads of chalcedony,
Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,
That my Hiawatha halted
In the land of the Dacotahs?
Was it not to see the maiden,
See the face of Laughing Water
Peeping from behind the curtain,
Hear the rustling of her garments
From behind the waving curtain,
As one sees the Minnehaha
Gleaming, glancing through the branches,
As one hears the Laughing Water
From behind its screen of branches?
Who shall say what thoughts and visions
Fill the fiery brains of young men?
Who shall say what dreams of beauty
Filled the heart of Hiawatha?
All he told to old Nokomis,
When he reached the lodge at sunset,
Was the meeting with his father,
Was his fight with Mudjekeewis;
Not a word he said of arrows,
Not a word of Laughing Water.

1854-55 1855

VICTOR GALBRAITH[1]

Under the walls of Monterey
At daybreak the bugles began to play,
Victor Galbraith!
In the mist of the morning damp and gray,
These were the words they seemed to say:
"Come forth to thy death,
Victor Galbraith!"

Forth he came, with a martial tread;
Firm was his step, erect his head;
Victor Galbraith,
He who so well the bugle played,
Could not mistake the words it said:
"Come forth to thy death,
Victor Galbraith!"

He looked at the earth, he looked at the sky,
He looked at the files of musketry,
Victor Galbraith!
And he said, with a steady voice and eye,
"Take good aim; I am ready to die!"
Thus challenges death
Victor Galbraith.

Twelve fiery tongues flashed straight and red,
Six leaden balls on their errand sped;
Victor Galbraith

---

[9] long ago

[10] The beautiful Falls of Minnehaha (laughing water) are in Minnesota, near St. Paul and Minneapolis, in a small tributary to the Mississippi.

[1] He was a bugler in a regiment of cavalry in Mexico, and was sentenced to death for some breach of discipline.

Falls to the ground, but he is not dead;
His name was not stamped on those balls of lead,[2]
And they only scath
Victor Galbraith.

Three balls are in his breast and brain,
But he rises out of the dust again,
Victor Galbraith!
The water he drinks has a bloody stain;
"O kill me, and put me out of my pain!"
In his agony prayeth
Victor Galbraith.

Forth dart once more those tongues of flame,
And the bugler has died a death of shame,
Victor Galbraith!
His soul has gone back to whence it came,
And no one answers to the name,
When the Sergeant saith,
"Victor Galbraith!"

Under the walls of Monterey
By night a bugle is heard to play,
Victor Galbraith!
Through the mist of the valley damp and gray
The sentinels hear the sound, and say,
"That is the wraith
Of Victor Galbraith!"

1855

MY LOST YOUTH

Often I think of the beautiful town[1]
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."[2]

I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides[3]
Of all my boyish dreams.
And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free;
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the bulwarks by the shore,
And the fort upon the hill;
The sunrise gun, with its hollow roar,
The drum-beat repeated o'er and o'er,
And the bugle wild and shrill.
And the music of that old song
Throbs in my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the sea-fight far away,[4]
How it thundered o'er the tide!
And the dead captains, as they lay
In their graves, o'erlooking the tranquil bay
Where they in battle died.
And the sound of that mournful song
Goes through me with a thrill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I can see the breezy dome of groves,
The shadows of Deering's Woods;
And the friendships old and the early loves
Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves
In quiet neighborhoods.
And the verse of that sweet old song,
It flutters and murmurs still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the school-boy's brain;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies, and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful song

---

[2] According to superstition a bullet will not kill a soldier unless his name is written on it.

[1] Portland, Maine, Longfellow's birth-place.

[2] The lines are in a nuptial song in a Latin treatise on Lapland, published in 1674, by Johannes Scheffer, Professor at Upsala.

[3] Mythological maidens, guardians of the golden apples of the sunset; hence, loosely, the western islands where they lived.

[4] The reference is to an engagement, between the American brig *Enterprise* and the English brig *Boxer*, which occurred off Portland in 1813. The *Enterprise* conquered, but the captains of both ships were killed and were buried side by side on shore.

Sings on, and is never still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

There are things of which I may not speak;
There are dreams that cannot die;
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,
And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
Come over me like a chill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

Strange to me now are the forms I meet
When I visit the dear old town;
But the native air is pure and sweet,
And the trees that o'ershadow each well-known street,
As they balance up and down,
Are singing the beautiful song,
Are sighing and whispering still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

And Deering's Woods are fresh and fair,
And with joy that is almost pain
My heart goes back to wander there,
And among the dreams of the days that were,
I find my lost youth again.
And the strange and beautiful song,
The groves are repeating it still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

1855 1855

THE DISCOVERER OF THE NORTH CAPE

A LEAF FROM KING ALFRED'S *Orosius*[1]

Othere, the old sea-captain,
Who dwelt in Helgoland,[2]
To King Alfred, the Lover of Truth,
Brought a snow-white walrus-tooth,
Which he held in his brown right hand.

His figure was tall and stately,
Like a boy's his eye appeared;
His hair was yellow as hay,
But threads of a silvery gray
Gleamed in his tawny beard.

Hearty and hale was Othere,
His cheek had the color of oak;
With a kind of laugh in his speech,
Like the sea-tide on a beach,
As unto the King he spoke.

And Alfred, King of the Saxons,
Had a book upon his knees,
And wrote down the wondrous tale
Of him who was first to sail
Into the Arctic seas.

"So far I live to the northward,
No man lives north of me:
To the east are wild mountain-chains,
And beyond them meres and plains;
To the westward all is sea.

"So far I live to the northward,
From the harbor of Skeringes-hale,[3]
If you only sailed by day,
With a fair wind all the way,
More than a month would you sail.

"I own six hundred reindeer,
With sheep and swine beside;
I have tribute from the Finns,
Whalebone and reindeer-skins,
And ropes of walrus-hide.

"I plowed the land with horses,
But my heart was ill at ease,
For the old seafaring men
Came to me now and then,
With their sagas of the seas;—

"Of Iceland and of Greenland,
And the stormy Hebrides,
And the undiscovered deep;—
Oh, I could not eat nor sleep
For thinking of those seas.

"To the northward stretched the desert,
How far I fain would know;
So at last I sallied forth,
And three days sailed due north,
As far as the whale-ships go.

"To the west of me was the ocean,
To the right the desolate shore,
But I did not slacken sail

---

[1] Alfred, king of the West Saxons 871-901 and a lover of learning, not only translated the history of the world written by Orosius, a Spanish monk of the fifth century, but also added to it. He relates among other things what was told him by Ohthere (or Ottar), a Norwegian sailor who about 870 rounded the North Cape and discovered the White Sea.

[2] Evidently not Helgoland, the island off the coast of Schleswig-Holstein (cf. ll. 26, 27), but possibly Helgo Island on the Norway coast southwest of North Cape.

[3] In the Gulf of Christiania.

For the walrus or the whale,
Till after three days more.

"The days grew longer and longer,
Till they became as one,
And northward through the haze
I saw the sullen blaze
Of the red midnight sun.

"And then uprose before me,
Upon the water's edge,
The huge and haggard shape
Of that unknown North Cape,
Whose form is like a wedge.

"The sea was rough and stormy,
The tempest howled and wailed,
And the sea-fog, like a ghost,
Haunted that dreary coast,
But onward still I sailed.

"Four days I steered to eastward,
Four days without a night:
Round in a fiery ring
Went the great sun, O King,
With red and lurid light."

Here Alfred, King of the Saxons,
Ceased writing for a while;
And raised his eyes from his book,
With a strange and puzzled look,
And an incredulous smile.

But Othere, the old sea-captain,
He neither paused nor stirred,
Till the King listened, and then
Once more took up his pen,
And wrote down every word.

"And now the land," said Othere,
"Bent southward suddenly,
And I followed the curving shore
And ever southward bore
Into a nameless sea.

"And there we hunted the walrus,
The narwhale,[4] and the seal;
Ha! 'twas a noble game!
And like the lightning's flame
Flew our harpoons of steel.

"There were six of us all together,
Norsemen of Helgoland;
In two days and no more
We killed of them threescore,
And dragged them to the strand!"

Here Alfred the Truth-Teller
Suddenly closed his book,
And lifted his blue eyes
With doubt and strange surmise
Depicted in their look.

And Othere the old sea-captain
Stared at him wild and weird,
Then smiled, till his shining teeth
Gleamed white from underneath
His tawny, quivering beard.

And to the King of the Saxons,
In witness of the truth,
Raising his noble head,
He stretched his brown hand, and said,
"Behold this walrus-tooth!"

1857

SANDALPHON[1]

Have you read in the Talmud[2] of old,
In the Legends the Rabbins have told
Of the limitless realms of the air,
Have you read it,—the marvelous story
Of Sandalphon, the Angel of Glory,
Sandalphon, the Angel of Prayer?

How, erect, at the outermost gates
Of the City Celestial he waits,
With his feet on the ladder of light,
That, crowded with angels unnumbered,
By Jacob was seen as he slumbered[3]
Alone in the desert at night?

The Angels of Wind and of Fire
Chant only one hymn, and expire
With the song's irresistible stress;
Expire in their rapture and wonder,
As harp-strings are broken asunder
By music they throb to express.

But serene in the rapturous throng,
Unmoved by the rush of the song,
With eyes unimpassioned and slow,
Among the dead angels, the deathless
Sandalphon stands listening breathless
To sounds that ascend from below;—

From the spirits on earth that adore,
From the souls that entreat and implore
In the fervor and passion of prayer;
From the hearts that are broken with losses,

---

[4] An animal resembling a small whale and having a tusk projecting horizontally forward from its upper jaw.

[1] In Jewish tradition, Sandalphon, who stands on earth but whose head reaches heaven, is an angel who weaves into garlands the prayers of the Israelites. He is not one of the multitudes of angels created each day who sing one song and then perish, but has existed since the first creation. Cf. Poe's *Israfel*, p. 314.

[2] The book of Jewish commentary upon the Old Testament.

[3] *Genesis* xxviii. 12.

And weary with dragging the crosses
Too heavy for mortals to bear.

And he gathers the prayers as he stands,
And they change into flowers in his hands,
Into garlands of purple and red;
And beneath the great arch of the portal,
Through the streets of the City Immortal
Is wafted the fragrance they shed.

It is but a legend, I know,—
A fable, a phantom, a show,
Of the ancient Rabbinical lore;
Yet the old medieval tradition,
The beautiful, strange superstition,
But haunts me and holds me the more.

When I look from my window at night,
And the welkin above is all white,
All throbbing and panting with stars,
Among them majestic is standing
Sandalphon the angel, expanding
His pinions in nebulous bars.

And the legend, I feel, is a part
Of the hunger and thirst of the heart,
The frenzy and fire of the brain,
That grasps at the fruitage forbidden,
The golden pomegranates of Eden,
To quiet its fever and pain.

1857

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations,
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice, and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper, and then a silence:
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape, they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine![1]

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you forever,
Yes, forever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,
And molder in dust away.

1859 1860

A DAY OF SUNSHINE

O gift of God! O perfect day:
Whereon shall no man work, but play;
Whereon it is enough for me,
Not to be doing, but to be!

Through every fiber of my brain,
Through every nerve, through every vein,
I feel the electric thrill, the touch
Of life, that seems almost too much.

I hear the wind among the trees
Playing celestial symphonies;
I see the branches downward bent,
Like keys of some great instrument.

And over me unrolls on high
The splendid scenery of the sky,
Where through a sapphire sea the sun
Sails like a golden galleon,[2]

Towards yonder cloud-land in the West,
Towards yonder Islands of the Blest,
Whose steep sierra far uplifts
Its craggy summits white with drifts.

---

[1] Legend relates that Archbishop Hatto of the tenth century, because in time of famine he burned in a barn a company of poor people caught stealing grain, was eaten alive by mice, although he had tried to escape them by building a high tower on a rock near Bingen. Cf. Southey's poem *God's Judgment on a Wicked Bishop.*

[2] An ancient Spanish high-decked ship often carrying treasure.

Blow, winds! and waft through all the rooms
The snow-flakes of the cherry-blooms!
Blow, winds! and bend within my reach
The fiery blossoms of the peach!

O Life and Love! O happy throng
Of thoughts, whose only speech is song!
O heart of man! canst thou not be
Blithe as the air is, and as free?
1860

From TALES OF A WAYSIDE INN[1]

PART FIRST

PRELUDE

THE WAYSIDE INN

One autumn night, in Sudbury town,
Across the meadows bare and brown,
The windows of the wayside inn
Gleamed red with fire-light through the leaves
Of woodbine, hanging from the eaves
Their crimson curtains rent and thin.

As ancient is this hostelry
As any in the land may be,
Built in the old Colonial day,
When men lived in a grander way,
With ampler hospitality;
A kind of old Hobgoblin Hall,
Now somewhat fallen to decay,
With weather-stains upon the wall,
And stairways worn, and crazy doors,
And creaking and uneven floors,
And chimneys huge, and tiled and tall.

A region of repose it seems,
A place of slumber and of dreams,
Remote among the wooded hills!
For there no noisy railway speeds,
Its torch-race scattering smoke and gleeds;[2]
But noon and night, the panting teams
Stop under the great oaks, that throw
Tangles of light and shade below,
On roofs and doors and window-sills.
Across the road the barns display
Their lines of stalls, their mows of hay,
Through the wide doors the breezes blow,
The wattled cocks strut to and fro,
And, half effaced by rain and shine,
The Red Horse prances on the sign.
Round this old-fashioned, quaint abode
Deep silence reigned, save when a gust
Went rushing down the county road,
And skeletons of leaves, and dust,
A moment quickened by its breath,
Shuddered and danced their dance of death,
And through the ancient oaks o'erhead
Mysterious voices moaned and fled.

But from the parlor of the inn
A pleasant murmur smote the ear,
Like water rushing through a weir:
Oft interrupted by the din
Of laughter and of loud applause,
And, in each intervening pause,
The music of a violin.
The fire-light, shedding over all
The splendor of its ruddy glow,
Filled the whole parlor large and low;
It gleamed on wainscot and on wall,
It touched with more than wonted grace
Fair Princess Mary's pictured face;
It bronzed the rafters overhead,
On the old spinet's ivory keys
It played inaudible melodies,
It crowned the somber clock with flame,
The hands, the hours, the maker's name,
And painted with a livelier red
The Landlord's coat-of-arms again;
And, flashing on the window-pane,
Emblazoned with its light and shade
The jovial rimes, that still remain,
Writ near a century ago
By the great Major Molineaux,
Whom Hawthorne has immortal made.[3]

Before the blazing fire of wood
Erect the rapt musician[4] stood;
And ever and anon he bent
His head upon his instrument,
And seemed to listen, till he caught
Confessions of its secret thought,—
The joy, the triumph, the lament,
The exultation and the pain;
Then, by the magic of his art,
He soothed the throbbings of its heart,
And lulled it into peace again.

---

[1] Longfellow, grouping the tellers of his tales after the manner of Boccaccio and Chaucer, brings them together in the Red-Horse Inn of Sudbury, Mass., about twenty miles west of Boston. The same family, the Howes, had kept the inn for one hundred and seventy-five years. In stage-coaching times it had been the regular stopping place for all travelers going westward.

[2] burning coals

[3] In his tale *My Kinsman, Major Molineux*, in *The Snow Image and Other Twice-Told Tales*. The lines on the window with the name Wm. Molineux, Jr., Esq., June 24, 1774, are:

What do you think?
Here is a good drink
Perhaps you may not know it;
If not in haste
Do stop and taste!
You very merry folk will show it.

[4] Ole Bull, 1810-1880, the Norwegian violinist.

Around the fireside at their ease
There sat a group of friends, entranced
With the delicious melodies;
Who from the far-off noisy town
Had to the wayside inn come down,
To rest beneath its old oak trees.
The fire-light on their faces glanced,
Their shadows on the wainscot danced,
And, though of different lands and speech,
Each had his tale to tell, and each
Was anxious to be pleased and please.
And while the sweet musician plays,
Let me in outline sketch them all,
Perchance uncouthly as the blaze
With its uncertain touch portrays
Their shadowy semblance on the wall.

But first the Landlord will I trace;
Grave in his aspect and attire;
A man of ancient pedigree,
A Justice of the Peace was he,
Known in all Sudbury as "The Squire."
Proud was he of his name and race,
Of old Sir William and Sir Hugh,
And in the parlor, full in view,
His coat-of-arms, well framed and glazed,
Upon the wall in colors blazed;
He beareth gules[5] upon his shield,
A chevron argent[6] in the field,
With three wolf's heads, and for the crest[7]
A Wyvern part-per-pale addressed
Upon a helmet barred; below
The scroll reads, "By the name of Howe."
And over this, no longer bright,
Though glimmering with a latent light,
Was hung the sword his grandsire bore
In the rebellious days of yore,
Down there at Concord in the fight.[8]

A youth was there, of quiet ways,
A Student[9] of old books and days,
To whom all tongues and lands were known,
And yet a lover of his own;
With many a social virtue graced,
And yet a friend of solitude;
A man of such a genial mood
The heart of all things he embraced,
And yet of such fastidious taste,
He never found the best too good.
Books were his passion and delight,
And in his upper room at home
Stood many a rare and sumptuous tome,
In vellum bound, with gold bedight,
Great volumes garmented in white,
Recalling Florence, Pisa, Rome.
He loved the twilight that surrounds
The border-land of old romance;
Where glitter hauberk, helm, and lance,
And banner waves, and trumpet sounds,
And ladies ride with hawk on wrist,
And mighty warriors sweep along,
Magnified by the purple mist,
The dusk of centuries and of song.
The chronicles of Charlemagne,
Of Merlin and the Mort d'Arthure,
Mingled together in his brain
With tales of Flores and Blanchefleur,
Sir Ferumbras, Sir Eglamour,
Sir Launcelot, Sir Morgadour,
Sir Guy, Sir Bevis, Sir Gawain.[10]

A young Sicilian,[11] too, was there;
In sight of Etna born and bred,
Some breath of its volcanic air
Was glowing in his heart and brain,
And, being rebellious to his liege,
After Palermo's fatal siege,
Across the western seas he fled,
In good King Bomba's[12] happy reign.
His face was like a summer night,
All flooded with a dusky light;
His hands were small; his teeth shone white
As sea-shells, when he smiled or spoke;
His sinews supple and strong as oak;
Clean shaven was he as a priest,
Who at the mass on Sunday sings,
Save that upon his upper lip
His beard, a good palm's length at least,
Level and pointed at the tip,
Shot sideways, like a swallow's wings.
The poets read he o'er and o'er,
And most of all the Immortal Four[13]
Of Italy; and next to those,
The story-telling bard of prose,
Who wrote the joyous Tuscan tales
Of the *Decameron*, that make

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[5] red

[6] silver chevron

[7] "A device supported by a wreath or coronet displayed above the shield. The description of the crest here is that of a helmet surmounted by a winged dragon (Wyvern), the whole appearing in a vertical bar through the middle of the shield (part-per-pale)." Quoted from *The Lake Classics* edition of the *Tales*, edited by J. R. Powell.

[8] April 19, 1775.

[9] Henry Ware Wales, a scholar and traveler.

[10] All these are heroes or heroines of medieval romance.

[11] Luigi Monti, an intimate friend of Longfellow's. Palermo fell into the hands of the French in 1849.

[12] A nickname given Ferdinand II., king of the Two Sicilies, because of his bombardment of Messina.

[13] Dante, 1265-1321; Petrarch, 1304-1374; Tasso, 1544-1595; Ariosto, 1474-1533. Boccaccio (1313-1375) laid the scene of his group of stories, the *Decameron*, in Florence and its environs. Fiesole is a town three miles from Florence.

Fiesole's green hills and vales
Remembered for Boccaccio's sake.
Much too of music was his thought;
The melodies and measures fraught
With sunshine and the open air,
Of vineyards and the singing sea
Of his beloved Sicily;
And much it pleased him to peruse
The songs of the Sicilian muse,—
Bucolic songs by Meli sung[14]
In the familiar peasant tongue,
That made men say, "Behold! once more
The pitying gods to earth restore
Theocritus of Syracuse!"[15]

A Spanish Jew[16] from Alicant
With aspect grand and grave was there;
Vender of silks and fabrics rare,
And attar of rose from the Levant.
Like an old Patriarch he appeared,
Abraham or Isaac, or at least
Some later Prophet or High-Priest;
With lustrous eyes, and olive skin,
And, wildly tossed from cheeks and chin,
The tumbling cataract of his beard.
His garments breathed a spicy scent
Of cinnamon and sandal blent,
Like the soft aromatic gales
That meet the mariner, who sails
Through the Moluccas and the seas
That wash the shores of Celebes.[17]
All stories that recorded are
By Pierre Alphonse[18] he knew by heart,
And it was rumored he could say
The parables of Sandabar,[19]
And all the Fables of Pilpay,[20]
Or if not all, the greater part!
Well versed was he in Hebrew books
Talmud and Targum, and the lore
Of Kabala;[21] and evermore
There was a mystery in his looks;
His eyes seemed gazing far away,
As if in vision or in trance
He heard the solemn sackbut[22] play,
And saw the Jewish maidens dance.

A Theologian,[23] from the school
Of Cambridge, on the Charles was there;
Skilful alike with tongue and pen,
He preached to all men everywhere
The Gospel of the Golden Rule,
The New Commandment given to men,
Thinking the deed, and not the creed,
Would help us in our utmost need.
With reverent feet the earth he trod,
Nor banished nature from his plan,
But studied still with deep research
To build the Universal Church,
Lofty as in the love of God,
And ample as the wants of man.

A Poet,[24] too, was there, whose verse
Was tender, musical, and terse;
The inspiration, the delight,
The gleam, the glory, the swift flight,
Of thoughts so sudden, that they seem
The revelations of a dream,
All these were his; but with them came
No envy of another's fame;
He did not find his sleep less sweet
For music in some neighboring street,
Nor rustling hear in every breeze
The laurels of Miltiades.[25]
Honor and blessings on his head
While living, good report when dead,
Who, not too eager for renown,
Accepts, but does not clutch, the crown!

Last the Musician, as he stood
Illumined by that fire of wood;
Fair-haired, blue-eyed, his aspect blithe,
His figure tall and straight and lithe,
And every feature of his face
Revealing his Norwegian race;
A radiance, streaming from within,
Around his eyes and forehead beamed,
The Angel with the violin,
Painted by Raphael,[26] he seemed.
He lived in that ideal world
Whose language is not speech, but song;
Around him evermore the throng
Of elves and sprites their dances whirled;
The Strömkarl[27] sang, the cataract hurled
Its headlong waters from the height;
And mingled in the wild delight
The scream of sea-birds in their flight,
The rumor of the forest trees,

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[14] The Sicilian, Meli, 1740-1815, wrote poetry that was genuinely pastoral (bucolic) in its reflection of simple shepherd life.

[15] A pastoral poet of Sicily in the third century B. C.

[16] A Boston merchant, Israel Edrehi; Alicante is a province in Spain.

[17] Islands of the Dutch East Indies.

[18] A Learned Spanish Jew of the 12th century.

[19] Hebrew tales of the middle ages.

[20] Or more correctly *Kalilah and Dimnah,* a Sanscrit work of the 4th century B. C.

[21] The Talmud contains the Jewish traditional law; the Targum is the Chaldaic version of the Old Testament; the Kabbala, of the tenth century, is a mystic explanation of the Hebrew religion.

[22] A musical instrument.

[23] Daniel Treadwell, a professor at Harvard.

[24] Thomas William Parsons, 1819-1892, an American poet and translator of parts of Dante.

[25] The Greek general Themistocles was jealous of Miltiades who won the battle of Marathon. Plutarch says "the trophies of Miltiades robbed Themistocles of sleep."

[26] The great Italian painter, 1483-1520.

[27] In Norse mythology, the spirit of a river. He plays on a five stringed viol and sometimes teaches his art to mortals.

The plunge of the implacable seas,
The tumult of the wind at night,
Voices of eld, like trumpets blowing,
Old ballads, and wild melodies
Through mist and darkness pouring forth,
Like Elivagar's[28] river flowing
Out of the glaciers of the North.

The instrument on which he played
Was in Cremona's[29] workshops made,
By a great master of the past,
Ere yet was lost the art divine;
Fashioned of maple and of pine,
That in Tyrolian forests vast
Had rocked and wrestled with the blast:
Exquisite was it in design,
Perfect in each minutest part,
A marvel of the lutist's art;
And in its hollow chamber, thus,
The maker from whose hands it came
Had written his unrivaled name,—
"Antonius Stradivarius."

And when he played, the atmosphere
Was filled with magic, and the ear
Caught echoes of that Harp of Gold,[30]
Whose music had so weird a sound,
The hunted stag forgot to bound,
The leaping rivulet backward rolled,
The birds came down from bush and tree,
The dead came from beneath the sea,
The maiden to the harper's knee!

The music ceased; the applause was loud,
The pleased musician smiled and bowed;
The wood-fire clapped its hands of flame,
The shadows on the wainscot stirred,
And from the harpsichord there came
A ghostly murmur of acclaim,
A sound like that sent down at night
By birds of passage in their flight,
From the remotest distance heard.

Then silence followed; then began
A clamor for the Landlord's tale,—
The story promised them of old,
They said, but always left untold;
And he, although a bashful man,
And all his courage seemed to fail,
Finding excuse of no avail,
Yielded; and thus the story ran.

1862 1863

The Landlord's Tale

✓

PAUL REVERE'S RIDE[1]

Listen, my children, and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town tonight,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light,—
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

Then he said, "Good night!" and with muffled oar
Silently rowed to the Charlestown shore,
Just as the moon rose over the bay,
Where swinging wide at her moorings lay
The *Somerset*, British man-of-war;
A phantom ship, with each mast and spar
Across the moon like a prison bar,
And a huge black hulk that was magnified
By its own reflection in the tide.

Meanwhile, his friend, through alley and street,
Wanders and watches with eager ears,
Till in the silence around him he hears
The muster of men at the barrack door,
The sound of arms, and the tramp of feet,
And the measured tread of the grenadiers,
Marching down to their boats on the shore.

Then he climbed the tower of the Old North Church,
By the wooden stairs, with stealthy tread,
To the belfry chamber overhead,
And startled the pigeons from their perch
On the somber rafters, that round him made
Masses and moving shapes of shade,—
By the trembling ladder, steep and tall,
To the highest window in the wall,
Where he paused to listen and look down
A moment on the roofs of the town,
And the moonlight flowing over all.

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[28] Ten rivers, the Elivagar, flowed from the spring Hvergelmir in the midst of Niflheim, the world of fog and cold in Norse mythology.

[29] A city of Lombardy, Italy, noted for its violin makers, among them Stradivarius, 1644?-1737.

[30] Orpheus, the Greek, by the music of his golden lyre enticed even trees and stones to follow him.

[1] Paul Revere, 1735-1818, rode from Boston to Lexington, in Middlesex county, on the night of April 18, 1775, to summon the militia. Longfellow believed that the lanterns—signals indicating that the British had left Boston for Concord—were hung in Christ Church, popularly called North Church, which still stands. Possibly they were hung, rather, in the North Meeting House in North Square, destroyed in the siege of Boston, 1775-1776.

Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead,
In their night-encampment on the hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That he could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The watchful night-wind, as it went
Creeping along from tent to tent,
And seeming to whisper, "All is well!"
A moment only he feels the spell
Of the place and the hour, and the secret dread
Of the lonely belfry and the dead;
For suddenly all his thoughts are bent
On a shadowy something far away,
Where the river widens to meet the bay,—
A line of black that bends and floats
On the rising tide, like a bridge of boats.

Meanwhile, impatient to mount and ride,
Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride
On the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
Now he patted his horse's side,
Now gazed at the landscape far and near,
Then, impetuous, stamped the earth,
And turned and tightened his saddle-girth;
But mostly he watched with eager search
The belfry-tower of the Old North Church,
As it rose above the graves on the hill,
Lonely and spectral and somber and still.
And lo! as he looks, on the belfry's height
A glimmer, and then a gleam of light!
He springs to the saddle, the bridle he turns,
But lingers and gazes, till full on his sight
A second lamp in the belfry burns!

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet:
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

He has left the village and mounted the steep,
And beneath him, tranquil and broad and deep,
Is the Mystic,[2] meeting the ocean tides;
And under the alders, that skirt its edge,
Now soft on the sand, now loud on the ledge,
Is heard the tramp of his steed as he rides.

It was twelve by the village clock
When he crossed the bridge into Medford town.
He heard the crowing of the cock,
And the barking of the farmer's dog,
And felt the damp of the river fog,
That rises after the sun goes down.

It was one by the village clock
When he galloped into Lexington.
He saw the gilded weathercock
Swim in the moonlight as he passed,
And the meeting-house windows, blank and bare,
Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
As if they already stood aghast
At the bloody work they would look upon.

It was two by the village clock
When he came to the bridge in Concord town.
He heard the bleating of the flock,
And the twitter of birds among the trees,
And felt the breath of the morning breeze
Blowing over the meadows brown.
And one[3] was safe and asleep in his bed
Who at the bridge would be first to fall,
Who that day would be lying dead,
Pierced by a British musket-ball.

You know the rest. In the books you have read,
How the British Regulars fired and fled,—
How the farmers gave them ball for ball,
From behind each fence and farm-yard wall,
Chasing the red-coats down the lane,
Then crossing the fields to emerge again
Under the trees at the turn of the road,
And only pausing to fire and load.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,—
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the Past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

1860 1861

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[2] The Mystic River separates Charlestown from Chelsea.

[3] Captain Isaac Davis of Acton, a town near Concord, was said to be the first killed in the Concord fight.

THE SICILIAN'S TALE

KING ROBERT OF SICILY[1]

Robert of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane[2]
And Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,[3]
Appareled in magnificent attire,
With retinue of many a knight and squire,
On St. John's eve,[4] at vespers, proudly sat
And heard the priests chant the Magnificat.[5]
And as he listened, o'er and o'er again
Repeated, like a burden or refrain,
He caught the words, *"Deposuit potentes*
De sede, et exaltavit humiles;"
And slowly lifting up his kingly head
He to a learned clerk[6] beside him said,
"What mean these words?" The clerk made answer meet,
"He has put down the mighty from their seat,
And has exalted them of low degree."
Thereat King Robert muttered scornfully,
"'Tis well that such seditious words are sung
Only by priests and in the Latin tongue;
For unto priests and people be it known,
There is no power can push me from my throne!"
And leaning back, he yawned and fell asleep,
Lulled by the chant monotonous and deep.

When he awoke, it was already night;
The church was empty, and there was no light,
Save where the lamps, that glimmered few and faint,
Lighted a little space before some saint.
He started from his seat and gazed around,
But saw no living thing and heard no sound.
He groped towards the door, but it was locked;
He cried aloud, and listened, and then knocked,
And uttered awful threatenings and complaints,
And imprecations upon men and saints.
The sounds reëchoed from the roof and walls
As if dead priests were laughing in their stalls!

At length the sexton, hearing from without
The tumult of the knocking and the shout,
And thinking thieves were in the house of prayer,
Came with his lantern, asking, "Who is there?"
Half choked with rage, King Robert fiercely said,
"Open: 'tis I, the King! Art thou afraid?"
The frightened sexton, muttering, with a curse,
"This is some drunken vagabond, or worse!"
Turned the great key and flung the portal wide;
A man rushed by him at a single stride,
Haggard, half naked, without hat or cloak,
Who neither turned, nor looked at him, nor spoke,
But leaped into the blackness of the night,
And vanished like a specter from his sight.

Robert of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane
And Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,
Despoiled of his magnificent attire,
Bareheaded, breathless, and besprent with mire,
With sense of wrong and outrage desperate,
Strode on and thundered at the palace gate;
Rushed through the courtyard, thrusting in his rage
To right and left each seneschal[7] and page,
And hurried up the broad and sounding stair,
His white face ghastly in the torches' glare.
From hall to hall he passed with breathless speed;
Voices and cries he heard, but did not heed,
Until at last he reached the banquet-room,
Blazing with light, and breathing with perfume.

There on the dais sat another king,
Wearing his robes, his crown, his signet-ring,
King Robert's self in features, form, and height,
But all transfigured with angelic light!
It was an Angel; and his presence there
With a divine effulgence filled the air,
An exaltation, piercing the disguise,
Though none the hidden Angel recognize.

A moment speechless, motionless, amazed,
The throneless monarch on the Angel gazed,
Who met his looks of anger and surprise

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[1] This old legend is said to date back as far as the time of Solomon, and is found in Hindu myths, in the *Gesta Romanorum*, a collection of medieval tales, and also in modern poetry. See Morris's *The Earthly Paradise* and Leigh Hunt's *A Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla*—the last probably being the source of Longfellow's poem.

[2] There were seven popes named Urban during the 11th-17th centuries, but no emperor Valmond.

[3] Germany.

[4] The eve of June 23d.

[5] "*Magnificat anima mea Dominum*" the Vulgate version of the song of the Virgin Mary (*Luke* i. 46-55), "My soul doth magnify the Lord."

[6] scholar

[7] high steward

With the divine compassion of his eyes;
Then said, "Who art thou? and why com'st thou here?"
To which King Robert answered with a sneer,
"I am the King, and come to claim my own
From an impostor, who usurps my throne!"
And suddenly, at these audacious words,
Up sprang the angry guests, and drew their swords;
The Angel answered, with unruffled brow,
"Nay, not the King, but the King's Jester, thou
Henceforth shalt wear the bells and scalloped cape,
And for thy counselor shalt lead an ape;
Thou shalt obey my servants when they call,
And wait upon my henchmen in the hall!"

Deaf to King Robert's threats and cries and prayers,
They thrust him from the hall and down the stairs;
A group of tittering pages ran before,
And as they opened wide the folding-door,
His heart failed, for he heard, with strange alarms,
The boisterous laughter of the men-at-arms,
And all the vaulted chamber roar and ring
With the mock plaudits of "Long live the King!"

Next morning, waking with the day's first beam,
He said within himself, "It was a dream!"
But the straw rustled as he turned his head,
There were the cap and bells beside his bed,
Around him rose the bare, discolored walls,
Close by, the steeds were champing in their stalls,
And in the corner, a revolting shape,
Shivering and chattering sat the wretched ape.
It was no dream; the world he loved so much
Had turned to dust and ashes at his touch!

Days came and went; and now returned again
To Sicily the old Saturnian[8] reign;
Under the Angel's governance benign
The happy island danced with corn and wine,
And deep within the mountain's burning breast
Enceladus,[9] the giant, was at rest.

Meanwhile King Robert yielded to his fate,
Sullen and silent and disconsolate.
Dressed in the motley garb that Jesters wear,
With look bewildered and a vacant stare,
Close shaven above the ears, as monks are shorn,
By courtiers mocked, by pages laughed to scorn,
His only friend the ape, his only food
What others left,—he still was unsubdued.
And when the Angel met him on his way,
And half in earnest, half in jest, would say,
Sternly, though tenderly, that he might feel
The velvet scabbard held a sword of steel,
"Art thou the King?" the passion of his woe
Burst from him in resistless overflow,
And, lifting high his forehead, he would fling
The haughty answer back, "I am, I am the King!"

Almost three years were ended; when there came
Ambassadors of great repute and name
From Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,
Unto King Robert, saying that Pope Urbane
By letter summoned them forthwith to come
On Holy Thursday to his city of Rome.
The Angel with great joy received his guests,
And gave them presents of embroidered vests,
And velvet mantles with rich ermine lined,
And rings and jewels of the rarest kind.
Then he departed with them o'er the sea
Into the lovely land of Italy,
Whose loveliness was more resplendent made
By the mere passing of that cavalcade,
With plumes, and cloaks, and housings, and the stir
Of jeweled bridle and of golden spur.
And lo! among the menials, in mock state,
Upon a piebald steed, with shambling gait,
His cloak of fox-tails flapping in the wind,

---

[8] According to Roman mythology, Saturn was one of the most ancient of the gods; deposed by Jupiter, he went to Italy, where he reigned as king. His age was termed golden because as god of harvest he taught the people agriculture and raised them from barbarism to civilization. His wife was Ops, plenty.

[9] One of the hundred-armed giants who made war upon the gods. According to some he was buried by Zeus under Mt. Ætna, in Sicily. His movements caused the earthquakes.

The solemn ape demurely perched behind,
King Robert rode, making huge merriment
In all the country towns through which they went.

The Pope received them with great pomp, and blare
Of bannered trumpets, on Saint Peter's square,
Giving his benediction and embrace,
Fervent, and full of apostolic grace.
While with congratulations and with prayers
He entertained the Angel unawares,
Robert, the Jester, bursting through the crowd,
Into their presence rushed, and cried aloud,
"I am the King! Look, and behold in me
Robert, your brother, King of Sicily!
This man, who wears my semblance to your eyes,
Is an impostor in a King's disguise.
Do you not know me? does no voice within
Answer my cry, and say we are akin?"
The Pope in silence, but with troubled mien,
Gazed at the Angel's countenance serene;
The Emperor, laughing, said, "It is strange sport
To keep a madman for thy Fool at court!"
And the poor, baffled Jester in disgrace
Was hustled back among the populace.

In solemn state the Holy Week went by,
And Easter Sunday gleamed upon the sky;
The presence of the Angel, with its light,
Before the sun rose, made the city bright,
And with new fervor filled the hearts of men,
Who felt that Christ indeed had risen again.
Even the Jester, on his bed of straw,
With haggard eyes the unwonted splendor saw,
He felt within a power unfelt before,
And, kneeling humbly on his chamber floor,
He heard the rushing garments of the Lord
Sweep through the silent air, ascending heavenward.

And now the visit ending, and once more
Valmond returning to the Danube's shore,
Homeward the Angel journeyed, and again
The land was made resplendent with his train,
Flashing along the towns of Italy
Unto Salerno, and from there by sea.
And when once more within Palermo's wall,
And, seated on the throne in his great hall,
He heard the Angelus from convent towers,
As if the better world conversed with ours,
He beckoned to King Robert to draw nigher,
And with a gesture bade the rest retire;
And when they were alone, the Angel said,
"Art thou the King?" Then bowing down his head,
King Robert crossed both hands upon his breast,
And meekly answered him: "Thou knowest best!
My sins as scarlet are; let me go hence,
And in some cloister's school of penitence,
Across those stones, that pave the way to heaven,
Walk barefoot, till my guilty soul is shriven!"

The Angel smiled, and from his radiant face
A holy light illumined all the place,
And through the open window, loud and clear,
They heard the monks chant in the chapel near,
Above the stir and tumult of the street:
"He has put down the mighty from their seat,
And has exalted them of low degree!"
And through the chant a second melody
Rose like the throbbing of a single string:
"I am an Angel, and thou art the King!"

King Robert, who was standing near the throne,
Lifted his eyes, and lo! he was alone!
But all appareled as in days of old,
With ermined mantle and with cloth of gold;
And when his courtiers came, they found him there
Kneeling upon the floor, absorbed in silent prayer.

1862

HAWTHORNE

MAY 23, 1864[1]

How beautiful it was, that one bright day
In the long week of rain!
Though all its splendor could not chase away
The omnipresent pain.

The lovely town was white with apple-blooms,
And the great elms o'erhead
Dark shadows wove on their aërial looms,
Shot through with golden thread.

---

[1] This was the date of the burial of Hawthorne.

Across the meadows, by the gray old manse,
The historic river flowed:
I was as one who wanders in a trance,
Unconscious of his road.

The faces of familiar friends seemed strange;
Their voices I could hear,
And yet the words they uttered seemed to change
Their meaning to my ear.

For the one face I looked for was not there,
The one low voice was mute;
Only an unseen presence filled the air,
And baffled my pursuit.

Now I look back, and meadow, manse, and stream
Dimly my thought defines;
I only see—a dream within a dream—
The hill-top hearsed with pines.[2]

I only hear above his place of rest
Their tender undertone,
The infinite longings of a troubled breast,
The voice so like his own.

There in seclusion and remote from men
The wizard hand lies cold,
Which at its topmost speed let fall the pen,
And left the tale half told.

Ah! who shall lift that wand of magic power,
And the lost clew regain?
The unfinished window in Aladdin's[3] tower
Unfinished must remain!

1864

FLOWER-DE-LUCE[1]

Beautiful lily, dwelling by still rivers,
Or solitary mere,
Or where the sluggish meadow-brook delivers
Its waters to the weir![2]

Thou laughest at the mill, the whirr and worry
Of spindle and of loom,
And the great wheel that toils amid the hurry
And rushing of the flume.

Born in the purple, born to joy and pleasance,
Thou dost not toil nor spin,
But makest glad and radiant with thy presence
The meadow and the lin.[3]

The wind blows, and uplifts thy drooping banner,
And round thee throng and run
The rushes, the green yeomen of thy manor,
The outlaws of the sun.

The burnished dragon-fly is thine attendant,
And tilts against the field,
And down the listed sunbeam rides resplendent
With steel-blue mail and shield.

Thou art the Iris, fair among the fairest,
Who, armed with golden rod
And winged with the celestial azure, bearest
The message of some God.

Thou art the Muse, who far from crowded cities
Hauntest the sylvan streams,
Playing on pipes of reed the artless ditties
That come to us as dreams.

O flower-de-luce, bloom on, and let the river
Linger to kiss thy feet!
O flower of song, bloom on, and make forever
The world more fair and sweet.

1866 1867

KILLED AT THE FORD

He is dead, the beautiful youth,
The heart of honor, the tongue of truth,
He, the life and light of us all,
Whose voice was blithe as a bugle-call,
Whom all eyes followed with one consent,
The cheer of whose laugh, and whose pleasant word,
Hushed all murmurs of discontent.

Only last night, as we rode along
Down the dark of the mountain gap,
To visit the picket-guard at the ford,
Little dreaming of any mishap,
He was humming the words of some old song:

---

[2] The Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Concord, where Hawthorne is buried.

[3] Aladdin, by means of his magic lamp, had a palace built for his bride in one night, but one window was left unfinished. Hawthorne left two romances unfinished, *Septimius Felton* and *Doctor Grimshaw's Secret*.

[1] The fleur-de-lis or lily of France—the iris. This selection is the title poem of a small collection published in 1867.

[2] Dam or other obstruction to check the flow of a stream.

[3] Waterfall, or the pool below it.

"Two red roses he had on his cap
And another he bore at the point of his sword."

Sudden and swift a whistling ball
Came out of a wood, and the voice was still;
Something I heard in the darkness fall,
And for a moment my blood grew chill;
I spake in a whisper, as he who speaks
In a room where some one is lying dead;
But he made no answer to what I said.

We lifted him up to his saddle again,
And through the mire and the mist and the rain
Carried him back to the silent camp,
And laid him as if asleep on his bed;
And I saw by the light of the surgeon's lamp
Two white roses upon his cheeks,
And one, just over his heart, blood-red!

And I saw in a vision how far and fleet
That fatal bullet went speeding forth,
Till it reached a town in the distant North,
Till it reached a house in a sunny street,
Till it reached a heart that ceased to beat
Without a murmur, without a cry;
And a bell was tolled, in that far-off town,
For one who had passed from cross to crown,
And the neighbors wondered that she should die.

1866 1867

GIOTTO'S TOWER[1]

How many lives, made beautiful and sweet
By self-devotion and by self-restraint,
Whose pleasure is to run without complaint
On unknown errands of the Paraclete,[2]
Wanting the reverence of unshodden feet,
Fail of the nimbus which the artists paint
Around the shining forehead of the saint,
And are in their completeness incomplete!
In the old Tuscan town stands Giotto's tower,
The lily of Florence blossoming in stone,—
A vision, a delight, and a desire,—
The builder's perfect and centennial flower,
That in the night of ages bloomed alone,[3]
But wanting still the glory of the spire.

1866 1866

DANTE[4]

Tuscan, that wanderest through the realms of gloom,
With thoughtful pace, and sad, majestic eyes,
Stern thoughts and awful from thy soul arise,
Like Farinata from his fiery tomb.
Thy sacred song is like the trump of doom;
Yet in thy heart what human sympathies,
What soft compassion glows; as in the skies
The tender stars their clouded lamps relume!
Methinks I see thee stand with pallid cheeks
By Fra Hilario in his diocese,
As up the convent-walls, in golden streaks,
The ascending sunbeams mark the day's decrease;
And, as he asks what there the stranger seeks,
Thy voice along the cloister whispers, "Peace!"

1843 1845

DIVINA COMMEDIA[1]

I

Oft have I seen at some cathedral door
A laborer, pausing in the dust and heat,
Lay down his burden, and with reverent feet

---

[1] Giotto, 1276-1337, the painter, architect and sculptor, who designed and began the campanile or belltower at Florence, intended that it should have a spire one hundred feet high, but Gaddi who completed the structure after Giotto's death, gave up that plan.

[2] Intercessor—used especially of the Holy Spirit.

[3] In allusion to the flowering, after a supposed hundred years' growth, of the century plant.

[4] From 1842, the year in which according to one biographer, "he had been steeping his soul in Dante" to the close of his life after he had translated the *Divina Commedia* (1867-1870), Longfellow was a student of the Italian poet. In this sonnet he sees Dante in two aspects, first as the passionate exile resentful of his political wrongs even in the realms of the lost where he meets Farinata, leader of his ancestral enemies, enduring fiery punishment, and returns to him scorn for scorn (*Inferno*, x); secondly, as the world-worn pilgrim seeking peace. A letter whose authenticity has been questioned, written by "Frate Ilario, a humble monk of Corvo," relates that when Dante, unknown, visited the monastery, "I questioned him of what he wanted . . . thereat he looked round at me and the brethren who were with me and answered, 'Peace.'" Longfellow's six sonnets relating to Dante have been placed together here without regard to chronology.

[1] Longfellow wrote these sonnets while translating the *Divina Commedia* into English verse, and prefixed them to different divisions of the translation. The student will note the extended figure beginning in the first sonnet

Enter, and cross himself, and on the floor
Kneel to repeat his paternoster[2] o'er;
Far off the noises of the world retreat;
The loud vociferations of the street
Become an undistinguishable roar.
So, as I enter here from day to day,
And leave my burden at this minster gate,
Kneeling in prayer, and not ashamed to pray,
The tumult of the time disconsolate
To inarticulate murmurs dies away,
While the eternal ages watch and wait.
1864
1864

II

How strange the sculptures that adorn these towers!
This crowd of statues, in whose folded sleeves
Birds build their nests; while canopied with leaves
Parvis[3] and portal bloom like trellised bowers,
And the vast minster seems a cross of flowers!
But fiends and dragons on the gargoyled[4] eaves
Watch the dead Christ between the living thieves,
And, underneath, the traitor Judas lowers!
Ah! from what agonies of heart and brain,
What exultations trampling on despair,
What tenderness, what tears, what hate of wrong,
What passionate outcry of a soul in pain,
Uprose this poem of the earth and air,
This medieval miracle of song!
1864

III

I enter, and I see thee in the gloom
Of the long aisles, O poet saturnine!
And strive to make my steps keep pace with thine.[5]
The air is filled with some unknown perfume;
The congregation of the dead make room
For thee to pass; the votive tapers shine;
Like rooks that haunt Ravenna's groves of pine
The hovering echoes fly from tomb to tomb.
From the confessionals I hear arise
Rehearsals of forgotten tragedies,
And lamentations from the crypts below;
And then a voice celestial that begins
With the pathetic words, "Although your sins
As scarlet be," and ends with "as the snow."
1865

V

I lift mine eyes, and all the windows blaze
With forms of Saints and holy men who died,
Here martyred and hereafter glorified;
And the great Rose[6] upon its leaves displays
Christ's Triumph, and the angelic roundelays,
With splendor upon splendor multiplied;
And Beatrice again at Dante's side
No more rebukes, but smiles her words of praise.
And then the organ sounds, and unseen choirs
Sing the old Latin hymns of peace and love,
And benedictions of the Holy Ghost;
And the melodious bells among the spires
O'er all the house-tops and through heaven above
Proclaim the elevation of the Host![7]
1866

VI

O star of morning and of liberty![8]
O bringer of the light, whose splendor shines
Above the darkness of the Apennines,
Forerunner of the day that is to be!

---

and running through the whole sequence: Dante's work, in spirit and in intellect is a reflection, like the cathedral, of the intense religious life of the middle ages. It is significant that Longfellow, whose creed was fundamentally so different from Dante's, should have been influenced, like all deep students of the great Tuscan, to a feeling of profound veneration for Dante's beliefs.

[2] The Lord's prayer—"Our Father."

[3] church-porch

[4] Water-spouts grotesquely carved. See Ruskin, *Stones of Venice* (Vol. II., Chap. iv., St. Mark's) on the imagery and symbolism of Gothic art.

[5] As Virgil conducted Dante through Hell and part of Purgatory, so Dante seems to be conducting Longfellow. The sonnet is full of echoes from Dante.

[6] A circular window of tracery and stained glass in conventionalized rose design generally placed in the western gable of a Gothic church.

[7] At the elevation, or lifting from the altar b the priest, of the host, or elements of th Lord's Supper, bells are rung and the worshipers adore the elements as the body an blood of Christ.

[8] Although Dante was a strict adherent of th medieval Church, he so constantly inveighe against its abuses and proclaimed the caus of liberty, that his name has been a rallyin cry through the centuries in the unificatio of Italy. This union was taking place whe Longfellow wrote.

The voices of the city and the sea,
The voices of the mountains and the pines,
Repeat thy song, till the familiar lines
Are footpaths for the thought of Italy!
Thy fame is blown abroad from all the heights,
Through all the nations, and a sound is heard,
As of a mighty wind, and men devout,
Strangers of Rome, and the new proselytes,
In their own language hear thy wondrous word,
And many are amazed, and many doubt.
1866

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Born, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1809, died, Boston, 1894. Of prominent New England ancestry, and a direct descendant of Anne Bradstreet, Holmes was son of a minister, educated at Phillips Academy, Andover, and at Harvard, graduating in 1829. He studied medicine in Boston and Paris, was made professor of anatomy and physiology at Dartmouth in 1839, and at Harvard in 1847, retaining his connection with Harvard until 1882. His poems written at various dates from 1836 included in the volumes *Songs in Many Keys*, 1861, *Humorous Poems*, 1865, *Songs of Many Seasons*, 1874, and *Before the Curfew*, 1888. His chief prose works were: *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, 1858; *The Professor at the Breakfast Table*, 1860; *Elsie Venner* (novel), 1861; *The Guardian Angel* (novel), 1867. To these should be added notable reviews, memorials, essays, and important scientific publications.

OLD IRONSIDES[1]

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more.

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

Oh, better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;
Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale!
1830 1830

TO AN INSECT

I love to hear thine earnest voice,
Wherever thou art hid,
Thou testy little dogmatist,
Thou pretty Katydid![1]
Thou mindest me of gentlefolks,—
Old gentlefolks are they,—
Thou say'st an undisputed thing
In such a solemn way.

Thou art a female, Katydid!
I know it by the trill
That quivers through thy piercing notes,
So petulant and shrill;
I think there is a knot of you
Beneath the hollow tree,—
A knot of spinster Katydids,—
Do Katydids drink tea?

Oh, tell me where did Katy live,
And what did Katy do?
And was she very fair and young,
And yet so wicked, too?
Did Katy love a naughty man,
Or kiss more cheeks than one?
I warrant Katy did no more
Than many a Kate has done.

Dear me! I'll tell you all about
My fuss with little Jane,
And Ann, with whom I used to walk
So often down the lane,
And all that tore their locks of black,
Or wet their eyes of blue,—
Pray tell me, sweetest Katydid,
What did poor Katy do?

Ah, no! the living oak shall crash,
That stood for ages still,
The rock shall rend its mossy base
And thunder down the hill,

---

[1] In this poem, written September 15, 1830, and printed next day in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Holmes voiced the indignation of the American people over the proposition made by the secretary of the navy and printed in the *Advertiser* on September 14, 1830, that the naval ship *Constitution*, familiarly known as *Old Ironsides*, which had survived several thrilling engagements in the war of 1812, be dismantled and sold. As a result of the popular feeling quickly aroused the old frigate was used instead as a school-ship, and later as a receiving ship.

[1] Cf. Freneau's poem, p. 184.

Before the little Katydid
Shall add one word, to tell
The mystic story of the maid
Whose name she knows so well.

Peace to the ever-murmuring race!
And when the latest one
Shall fold in death her feeble wings
Beneath the autumn sun,
Then shall she raise her fainting voice
And lift her drooping lid,
And then the child of future years
Shall hear what Katy did.

1831 1831

MY AUNT

My aunt! my dear unmarried aunt!
Long years have o'er her flown;
Yet still she strains the aching clasp
That binds her virgin zone;
I know it hurts her,—though she looks
As cheerful as she can;
Her waist is ampler than her life,
For life is but a span.

My aunt! my poor deluded aunt!
Her hair is almost gray;
Why will she train that winter curl
In such a spring-like way?
How can she lay her glasses down,
And say she reads as well,
When, through a double convex lens,
She just makes out to spell?

Her father—grandpapa! forgive
This erring lip its smiles—
Vowed she should make the finest girl
Within a hundred miles;
He sent her to a stylish school;
'Twas in her thirteenth June;
And with her, as the rules required,
"Two towels and a spoon."

They braced my aunt against a board,
To make her straight and tall;
They laced her up, they starved her down,
To make her light and small;
They pinched her feet, they singed her hair,
They screwed it up with pins;—
Oh, never mortal suffered more
In penance for her sins.

So, when my precious aunt was done,
My grandsire brought her back;
(By daylight, lest some rabid youth
Might follow on the track;)
"Ah!" said my grandsire, as he shook
Some powder in his pan,[1]
"What could this lovely creature do
Against a desperate man!"

Alas! nor chariot, nor barouche,
Nor bandit cavalcade,
Tore from the trembling father's arms
His all-accomplished maid.
For her how happy had it been!
And Heaven had spared to me
To see one sad, ungathered rose
On my ancestral tree.

1831 1831

THE LAST LEAF[2]

I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
And again
The pavement stones resound
As he totters o'er the ground
With his cane.

They say that in his prime,
Ere the pruning-knife of Time
Cut him down,
Not a better man was found
By the Crier on his round
Through the town.

But now he walks the streets,
And he looks at all he meets
Sad and wan,
And he shakes his feeble head,
That it seems as if he said,
"They are gone."

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

---

[1] Just before shooting the old flint-lock fire-arms, the pan, a minute spoon-shaped receptacle outside the lock, had to be replenished with fresh powder, which, when ignited by flint and steel, would fire the charge inside.

[2] Major Thomas Melville, "the last of the cocked hats," was a familiar sight in Boston in 1831-32. "His aspect among the crowds of a later generation reminded me of a withered leaf which has held to its stem through the storms of autumn and winter, and finds itself still clinging to its bough while the new growths of spring are bursting their buds and spreading their foliage all around it. I make this explanation for the benefit of those who have been puzzled by the lines,

> "The last leaf upon the tree
> *In the spring.*"

[Holmes's note in the Cambridge edition of his poems, published by The Houghton Mifflin Company.]

My grandmamma has said—
Poor old lady, she is dead
Long ago—
That he had a Roman nose,
And his cheek was like a rose
In the snow.

But now his nose is thin,
And it rests upon his chin
Like a staff,
And a crook is in his back,
And a melancholy crack
In his laugh.

I know it is a sin
For me to sit and grin
At him here;
But the old three-cornered hat,
And the breeches, and all that,
Are so queer!

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.

1831 1831

A SONG

FOR THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF HARVARD COLLEGE, 1836

When the Puritans came over
Our hills and swamps to clear,
The woods were full of catamounts,
And Indians red as deer,
With tomahawks and scalping-knives,
That make folks' heads look queer;
Oh the ship from England used to bring
A hundred wigs a year!

The crows came cawing through the air
To pluck the Pilgrims' corn,
The bears came snuffing round the door
Whene'er a babe was born,
The rattlesnakes were bigger round
Than the butt of the old ram's horn
The deacon blew at meeting time
On every "Sabbath" morn.

But soon they knocked the wigwams down,
And pine-tree trunk and limb
Began to sprout among the leaves
In shape of steeples slim;
And out the little wharves were stretched
Along the ocean's rim,
And up the little school-house shot
To keep the boys in trim.

And when at length the College rose,
The sachem cocked his eye
At every tutor's meager ribs
Whose coat-tails whistled by:
But when the Greek and Hebrew words
Came tumbling from their jaws,
The copper-colored children all
Ran screaming to the squaws.

And who was on the Catalogue
When college was begun?
Two nephews of the President,
And *the* Professor's son;
(They turned a little Indian by,
As brown as any bun;)
Lord! how the seniors knocked about
The freshman class of one!

They had not then the dainty things
That commons now afford,
But *succotash* and *hominy*
Were smoking on the board;
They did not rattle round in gigs,
Or dash in long-tail blues,
But always on Commencement days
The tutors blacked their shoes.

God bless the ancient Puritans!
Their lot was hard enough;
But honest hearts make iron arms,
And tender maids are tough;
So love and faith have formed and fed
Our true-born Yankee stuff,
And keep the kernel in the shell
The British found so rough!

1836 1849

ON LENDING A PUNCH-BOWL

This ancient silver bowl of mine, it tells of good old times,
Of joyous days, and jolly nights, and merry Christmas chimes;
They were a free and jovial race, but honest, brave, and true,
That dipped their ladle in the punch when this old bowl was new.

A Spanish galleon brought the bar;[1] so runs the ancient tale;
'T was hammered by an Antwerp smith, whose arm was like a flail;
And now and then between the strokes, for fear his strength should fail,
He wiped his brow, and quaffed a cup of good old Flemish ale.

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[1] bar silver

'T was purchased by an English squire to please his loving dame,
Who saw the cherubs, and conceived a longing for the same;
And oft as on the ancient stock another twig was found,
'T was filled with caudle[2] spiced and hot, and handed smoking round.

But, changing hands, it reached at length a Puritan divine,
Who used to follow Timothy, and take a little wine,[3]
But hated punch and prelacy; and so it was, perhaps,
He went to Leyden,[4] where he found conventicles[5] and schnapps.[6]

And then, of course, you know what's next,—it left the Dutchman's shore
With those that in the *Mayflower* came,—a hundred souls and more,—
Along with all the furniture, to fill their new abodes,—
To judge by what is still on hand, at least a hundred loads.

'T was on a dreary winter's eve, the night was closing dim,
When brave Miles Standish took the bowl, and filled it to the brim;
The little Captain stood and stirred the posset with his sword,
And all his sturdy men-at-arms were ranged about the board.

He poured the fiery Hollands in,—the man that never feared,—
He took a long and solemn draught, and wiped his yellow beard;
And one by one the musketeers—the men that fought and prayed—
All drank as 't were their mother's milk, and not a man afraid.

That night, affrighted from his nest, the screaming eagle flew,
He heard the Pequot's ringing whoop, the soldier's wild halloo;
And there the sachem learned the rule he taught to kith and kin,
"Run from the white man when you find he smells of Hollands gin!"

A hundred years, and fifty more, had spread their leaves and snows,
A thousand rubs had flattened down each little cherub's nose;
When once again the bowl was filled, but not in mirth or joy,
'T was mingled by a mother's hand to cheer her parting boy.

"Drink, John," she said, "'t will do you good,—poor child, you'll never bear
This working in the dismal trench, out in the midnight air;
And if—God bless me!—you were hurt, 't would keep away the chill";
So John *did* drink,—and well he wrought that night at Bunker's Hill!

I tell you, there was generous warmth in good old English cheer;
I tell you, 't was a pleasant thought to bring its symbol here.
'T is but the fool that loves excess; hast thou a drunken soul?
Thy bane is in thy shallow skull, not in my silver bowl!

I love the memory of the past,—its pressed yet fragrant flowers,—
The moss that clothes its broken walls,—the ivy on its towers;—
Nay, this poor bauble it bequeathed,—my eyes grow moist and dim,
To think of all the vanished joys that danced around its brim.

Then fill a fair and honest cup, and bear it straight to me;
The goblet hallows all it holds, whate'er the liquid be;
And may the cherubs on its face protect me from the sin,
That dooms one to those dreadful words,—
"My dear, where *have* you been?"

1849

NON-RESISTANCE[1]

Perhaps too far in these considerate days
Has patience carried her submissive ways;
Wisdom has taught us to be calm and meek,
To take one blow, and turn the other cheek;
It is not written what a man shall do
If the rude caitiff smite the other too!

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[2] A hot drink made of wine, eggs, etc.
[3] 1 *Timothy* v. 23.
[4] The Pilgrims went to Leyden, Holland, from England before coming to America.
[5] Dissenters' religious meetings.
[6] Holland gin.

[1] This poem may have been called forth by some lines of Whittier's revealing Quaker sentiment at the beginning of the agitation that led to the Civil War.

Land of our fathers, in thine hour of need
God help thee, guarded by the passive creed!
As the lone pilgrim trusts to beads and cowl,
When through the forest rings the gray wolf's howl;
As the deep galleon trusts her gilded prow
When the black corsair slants athwart her bow;
As the poor pheasant, with his peaceful mien,
Trusts to his feathers, shining golden-green,
When the dark plumage with the crimson beak
Has rustled shadowy from its splintered peak,—
So trust thy friends, whose babbling tongues would charm
The lifted saber from thy foeman's arm,
Thy torches ready for the answering peal
From bellowing fort and thunder-freighted keel!

1850 1862

THE OLD MAN DREAMS

Oh for one hour of youthful joy![1]
Give back my twentieth spring!
I'd rather laugh a bright-haired boy
Than reign a gray-beard king!

Off with the spoils of wrinkled age!
Away with Learning's crown!
Tear out life's Wisdom-written page,
And dash its trophies down!

One moment let my life-blood stream
From boyhood's fount of flame!
Give me one giddy, reeling dream
Of life all love and fame!

My listening angel heard the prayer,
And calmly smiling, said,
"If I but touch thy silvered hair,
Thy hasty wish hath sped.

"But is there nothing in thy track
To bid thee fondly stay,
While the swift seasons hurry back
To find the wished-for day?"

"Ah, truest soul of womankind!
Without thee, what were life?
One bliss I cannot leave behind:
I'll take—my—precious—wife!"

The angel took a sapphire pen
And wrote in rainbow dew,
The man would be a boy again,
And be a husband too!

"And is there nothing yet unsaid
Before the change appears?
Remember, all their gifts have fled
With those dissolving years!"

"Why, yes"; for memory would recall
My fond paternal joys;
"I could not bear to leave them all—
I'll take—my—girl—and—boys."

The smiling angel dropped his pen,—
"Why, this will never do;
The man would be a boy again,
And be a father, too!"

And so I laughed,—my laughter woke
The household with its noise,—
And wrote my dream, when morning broke,
To please the gray-haired boys.

1854 1858

THE TWO ARMIES

As Life's unending column pours,
Two marshaled hosts are seen,—
Two armies on the trampled shores
That Death flows black between.

One marches to the drum-beat's roll,
The wide-mouthed clarion's bray,
And bears upon a crimson scroll,
"Our glory is to slay."

One moves in silence by the stream,
With sad, yet watchful eyes,
Calm as the patient planet's gleam
That walks the clouded skies.

Along its front no sabers shine,
No blood-red pennons wave;
Its banner bears the single line,
"Our duty is to save."

For those no death-bed's lingering shade;
At Honor's trumpet-call,
With knitted brow and lifted blade
In Glory's arms they fall.

For these no clashing falchions bright,
No stirring battle-cry;

[1] Cf. Byron, "Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story," etc., in *Stanzas Written on the Road between Florence and Pisa.*

The bloodless stabber calls by night,—
Each answers, "Here am I!"

For those the sculptor's laureled bust,
The builder's marble piles,
The anthems pealing o'er their dust
Through long cathedral aisles.

For these the blossom-sprinkled turf
That floods the lonely graves
When Spring rolls in her sea-green surf
In flowery-foaming waves.

Two paths lead upward from below,
And angels wait above,
Who count each burning life-drop's flow,
Each falling tear of Love.

Though from the Hero's bleeding breast
Her pulses Freedom drew,
Though the white lilies in her crest
Sprang from that scarlet dew,—

While Valor's haughty champions wait
Till all their scars are shown,
Love walks unchallenged through the gate,
To sit beside the Throne!

1858 1858

THE DEACON'S MASTERPIECE;[1]

OR, THE WONDERFUL "ONE-HOSS-SHAY."

A LOGICAL STORY

Have you heard of the wonderful one-hoss-shay,
That was built in such a logical way
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits,—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive,—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive![2]
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake-day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss-shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot,—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace,—lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will,—
Above or below, or within or without,—
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
That a chaise *breaks down,* but doesn't *wear out.*

But the Deacon swore (as Deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*,")
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'N' the keounty 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it *couldn'* break daown:
—"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke,—
That was for spokes and floor and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The crossbars were ash, from the straightest trees;
The panels of white-wood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum,"—
Last of its timber,—they couldn't sell 'em,
Never an axe had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;
Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through."—
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder, and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
Deacon and deaconess dropped away,

[1] Professor Barrett Wendell sees in this poem a satire in which the "shay" is the extreme Puritan doctrine of the eighteenth century.

[2] The Hanoverian kings of England—the four Georges—were descended from the Elector of Hanover and Sophia, granddaughter of James I.

Children and grandchildren—where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss-shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake-day!

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED;—it came and found
The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred increased by ten;—
"Hahnsum kerridge" they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came;—
Running as usual; much the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrive,
And then come fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it.—You're welcome.—No extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER,—the Earthquake-day.—
There are traces of age in the one-hoss-shay,
A general flavor of mild decay,
But nothing local, as one may say.
There couldn't be,—for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whippletree neither less nor more,
And the back crossbar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle and hub *encore*.
And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt
In another hour it will be *worn out!*

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-horse-shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
"Huddup!" said the parson.—Off went they.

The parson was working his Sunday's text,—
Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
At what the—Moses—was coming next.
All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
—First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill,—
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half-past nine by the meet'n'-house clock,—
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
—What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?
The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once,—
All at once and nothing first,—
Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss-shay.
Logic is logic. That's all I say.

1858 1858

THE VOICELESS

We count the broken lyres that rest
  Where the sweet wailing singers slumber,
But o'er their silent sister's breast
  The wild flowers who will stoop to number?
A few can touch the magic string,
  And noisy Fame is proud to win them:—
Alas for those that never sing,
  But die with all their music in them!

Nay, grieve not for the dead alone
  Whose song has told their hearts' sad story,—
Weep for the voiceless, who have known
  The cross without the crown of glory!
Not where Leucadian[1] breezes sweep
  O'er Sappho's memory-haunted billow,
But where the glistening night-dews weep
  On nameless sorrow's churchyard pillow.

O hearts that break and give no sign
  Save whitening lip and fading tresses,
Till Death pours out his longed-for wine
  Slow-dropped from Misery's crushing presses,—
If singing breath or echoing chord
  To every hidden pang were given,
What endless melodies were poured,
  As sad as earth, as sweet as heaven!

1858 1858

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[1] Leucadia is one of the Ionian islands. Sappho (c. 600 B. C.), the Greek poet, is said, but without confirmation, to have thrown herself into the sea from one of its southwestern cliffs.

BOSTON COMMON.—THREE PICTURES

FOR THE FAIR IN AID OF THE FUND TO PROCURE BALL'S STATUE OF WASHINGTON[1]

1630

All overgrown with bush and fern,
And straggling clumps of tangled trees,
With trunks that lean and boughs that turn,
Bent eastward by the mastering breeze,—
With spongy bogs that drip and fill
A yellow pond with muddy rain,
Beneath the shaggy southern hill
Lies wet and low the Shawmut plain.
And hark! the trodden branches crack;
A crow flaps off with startled scream;
A straying woodchuck canters back;
A bittern rises from the stream;
Leaps from his lair a frightened deer;
An otter plunges in the pool;—
Here comes old Shawmut's pioneer,[2]
The parson on his brindled bull!

1774

The streets are thronged with trampling feet,
The northern hill is ridged with graves,
But night and morn the drum is beat
To frighten down the "rebel knaves."
The stones of King Street[3] still are red,
And yet the bloody red-coats come:
I hear their pacing sentry's tread,
The click of steel, the tap of drum,
And over all the open green,
Where grazed of late the harmless kine,
The cannon's deepening ruts are seen,
The war-horse stamps, the bayonets shine.
The clouds are dark with crimson rain
Above the murderous hirelings' den,
And soon their whistling showers shall stain
The pipe-clayed[4] belts of Gage's men.

186—

Around the green, in morning light,
The spired and palaced summits blaze,
And, sunlike, from her Beacon-height[5]
The dome-crowned city spreads her rays;
They span the waves, they belt the plains,
They skirt the roads with bands of white,
Till with a flash of gilded panes
Yon farthest hillside bounds the sight.
Peace, Freedom, Wealth! no fairer view,
Though with the wild-bird's restless wings
We sailed beneath the noontide's blue
Or chased the moonlight's endless rings!
Here, fitly raised by grateful hands
His holiest memory to recall,
The Hero's, Patriot's image stands;
He led our sires who won them all!

1859 1859

THE BOYS[1]

Has there any old fellow got mixed with the boys?
If there has, take him out, without making a noise.
Hang the Almanac's cheat and the Catalogue's spite!
Old Time is a liar! We're twenty tonight!

We're twenty! We're twenty! Who says we are more?
He's tipsy,—young jackanapes!—show him the door!
"Gray temples at twenty?"—Yes! *white*, if we please;
Where the snow-flakes fall thickest there's nothing can freeze!

Was it snowing I spoke of? Excuse the mistake!
Look close,—you will see not a sign of a flake;
We want some new garlands for those we have shed,—
And these are white roses in place of the red!

We've a trick, we young fellows, you may have been told,
Of talking (in public) as if we were old:—
That boy we call "Doctor,"[2] and this we call "Judge";[3]—
It's a neat little fiction,—of course it's all fudge.

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[1] Thomas Ball, 1819-1911, was an American sculptor. His equestrian statue of Washington is in the Boston Public Gardens.

[2] The Reverend William Blackstone (or Blaxton) was the first settler, in 1623, of Shawmut (Boston). Later he sold his land for cattle and became the first white settler of Rhode Island. In his old age, being too poor to own a horse, he frequently rode a bull to town.

[3] The scene of the "Boston Massacre," 1770. It led to the withdrawing from Boston of General Gates's two regiments. See Fiske, *American Revolution*, i. 66.

[4] Whitened with pipe-clay.

[5] Beacon Hill.

[1] This poem was written for the meeting of the Harvard class of 1829 held on Jan. 6, 1859. The class numbered fifty-nine and included many distinguished men besides Holmes. See note, Cambridge edition, p. 340.

[2] Francis Thomas.

[3] George Tyler Bigelow, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts.

That fellow's the "Speaker,"[4]—the one on the right;
"Mr. Mayor,"[5] my young one, how are you tonight?
That's our "Member of Congress,"[6] we say when we chaff;
There's the "Reverend"[7] What's his name?—don't make me laugh.

That boy with the grave mathematical look[8]
Made believe he had written a wonderful book,
And the Royal Society thought it was *true!*
So they chose him right in; a good joke it was, too!

There's a boy, we pretend, with a three-decker-brain,[9]
That could harness a team with a logical chain;
When he spoke for our manhood in syllabled fire,
We called him "The Justice," but now he's "The Squire."

And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith,—
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;[10]
But he shouted a song for the brave and the free,—
Just read on his medal, "My country, "of thee!"

You hear that boy laughing?—You think he's all fun;
But the angels laugh, too, at the good he has done;
The children laugh loud as they troop to his call,
And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest of all!

Yes, we're boys,—always playing with tongue or with pen,—
And I sometimes have asked,—Shall we ever be men?
Shall we always be youthful and laughing and gay,
Till the last dear companion drops smiling away?

Then here's to our boyhood, its gold and its gray!
The stars of its winter, the dews of its May!
And when we have done with our life-lasting toys,
Dear Father, take care of thy children, THE BOYS!

1859 1859

INTERNATIONAL ODE[1]

OUR FATHERS' LAND

God bless our Fathers' Land!
Keep her in heart and hand
One with our own!
From all her foes defend,
Be her brave People's Friend,
On all her realms descend,
Protect her Throne!

Father, with loving care,
Guard Thou her kingdom's Heir,
Guide all his ways:
Thine arm his shelter be,
From him by land and sea
Bid storm and danger flee,
Prolong his days!

Lord, let War's tempest cease,
Fold the whole Earth in peace
Under Thy wings!
Make all Thy nations one,
All hearts beneath the sun,
Till Thou shalt reign alone,
Great King of kings!

1860 1860

TO MY READERS

Nay, blame me not; I might have spared
Your patience many a trivial verse,
Yet these my earlier welcome shared,
So, let the better shield the worse.

And some might say, "Those ruder songs
Had freshness which the new have lost;
To spring the opening leaf belongs,
The chestnut-burs await the frost."

---

[4] Francis B. Crowninshield, Speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

[5] G. W. Richardson of Worcester, Massachusetts.

[6] George T. Davis.

[7] James Freeman Clarke, a Unitarian minister.

[8] Benjamin Peirce, an eminent mathematician, was associate member of the Royal Astronomical Society of London and honorary member of the Royal Society of London.

[9] Benjamin R. Curtis, Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States 1851-1857.

[10] Samuel Francis Smith, author of *America*.

[1] Sung in unison by twelve hundred children of the public schools, at the visit of the Prince of Wales to Boston, October 18, 1860. Air, "God Save the Queen." [Holmes's note.]

When those I wrote, my locks were brown,
When these I write—ah, well-a-day!
The autumn thistle's silvery down
Is not the purple bloom of May!

Go, little book, whose pages hold
Those garnered years in loving trust;
How long before your blue and gold[1]
Shall fade and whiten in the dust?

O sexton of the alcoved tomb,
Where souls in leathern cerements lie,
Tell me each living poet's doom!
How long before his book shall die?

It matters little, soon or late,
A day, a month, a year, an age,—
I read oblivion in its date,
And Finis on its title-page.

Before we sighed, our griefs were told;
Before we smiled, our joys were sung;
And all our passions shaped of old
In accents lost to mortal tongue.

In vain a fresher mold we seek,—
Can all the varied phrases tell
That Babel's wandering children[2] speak
How thrushes sing or lilacs smell?

Caged in the poet's lonely heart,
Love wastes unheard its tenderest tone;
The soul that sings must dwell apart,
Its inward melodies unknown.

Deal gently with us, ye who read!
Our largest hope is unfulfilled,—
The promise still outruns the deed,—
The tower, but not the spire, we build.[3]

Our whitest pearl we never find;
Our ripest fruit we never reach;
The flowering moments of the mind
Drop half their petals in our speech.

These are my blossoms; if they wear
One streak of morn or evening's glow,
Accept them; but to me more fair
The buds of song that never blow.
1862 1862

DOROTHY Q.

A FAMILY PORTRAIT[1]

Grandmother's mother: her age, I guess,
Thirteen summers, or something less;
Girlish bust, but womanly air;
Smooth, square forehead with uprolled hair;
Lips that lover has never kissed;
Taper fingers and slender wrist;
Hanging sleeves of stiff brocade;
So they painted the little maid.

On her hand a parrot green
Sits unmoving and broods serene.
Hold up the canvas full in view,—
Look! there's a rent the light shines through,
Dark with a century's fringe of dust,—
That was a Red-Coat's rapier-thrust!
Such is the tale the lady old,
Dorothy's daughter's daughter, told.

Who the painter was none may tell,—
One whose best was not over well;
Hard and dry, it must be confessed,
Flat as a rose that has long been pressed;
Yet in her cheek the hues are bright,
Dainty colors of red and white,
And in her slender shape are seen
Hint and promise of stately mien.

Look not on her with eyes of scorn,—
Dorothy Q. was a lady born!
Ay! since the galloping Normans came,
England's annals have known her name;
And still to the three-hilled rebel town[2]
Dear is that ancient name's renown,
For many a civic wreath they won,
The youthful sire and the gray-haired son.

O Damsel Dorothy! Dorothy Q.!
Strange is the gift that I owe to you;
Such a gift as never a king
Save to daughter or son might bring,—
All my tenure of heart and hand,
All my title to house and land;
Mother and sister and child and wife
And joy and sorrow and death and life!

What if a hundred years ago
Those close-shut lips had answered No,

---

[1] This poem was written to introduce the "Blue and Gold" edition of Holmes's poems.
[2] *Genesis* xi. 9.
[3] See note 1, p. 639.

[1] Dorothy Quincy, Holmes's great-grandmother, was a niece of Josiah Quincy, a patriot of pre-Revolutionary times, whose son, the distinguished Josiah Quincy, was statesman, orator, and historian. The name came into England with the Norman Conquest as De or de Quincey, the form used by the English essayist.
[2] Boston was originally called Trimountaine because it was built on the three-topped hill afterwards called Beacon Hill.

When forth the tremulous question came
That cost the maiden her Norman name,
And under the folds that look so still
The bodice swelled with the bosom's thrill?
Should I be I, or would it be
One tenth another, to nine tenths me?

Soft is the breath of a maiden's YES:
Not the light gossamer stirs with less;
But never a cable that holds so fast
Through all the battles of wave and blast,
And never an echo of speech or song
That lives in the babbling air so long!
There were tones in the voice that whispered then
You may hear today in a hundred men.

O lady and lover, how faint and far
Your images hover,—and here we are,
Solid and stirring in flesh and bone,—
Edward's[3] and Dorothy's—all their own,—
A goodly record for Time to show
Of a syllable spoken so long ago!—
Shall I bless you, Dorothy, or forgive
For the tender whisper that bade me live?

It shall be a blessing, my little maid!
I will heal the stab of the Red-Coat's blade,
And freshen the gold of the tarnished frame,
And gild with a rime your household name
So you shall smile on us brave and bright
As first you greeted the morning's light,
And live untroubled by woes and fears
Through a second youth of a hundred years.

1871 1871

HOW THE OLD HORSE WON THE BET

DEDICATED BY A CONTRIBUTOR TO THE COLLEGIAN, 1830, TO THE EDITORS OF THE HARVARD ADVOCATE, 1876.

'T was on the famous trotting-ground,
The betting men were gathered round
From far and near; the "cracks" were there
Whose deeds the sporting prints declare:
The swift g. m.,[1] Old Hiram's nag,
The fleet s. h.,[2] Dan Pfeiffer's brag,
With these a third—and who is he
That stands beside his fast b. g.?[3]
Budd Doble, whose catarrhal name
So fills the nasal trump of fame.
There too stood many a noted steed
Of Messenger and Morgan breed;
Green horses also, not a few;
Unknown as yet what they could do;
And all the hacks that know so well
The scourgings of the Sunday swell.

Blue are the skies of opening day;
The bordering turf is green with May;
The sunshine's golden gleam is thrown
On sorrel, chestnut, bay, and roan;
The horses paw and prance and neigh,
Fillies and colts like kittens play,
And dance and toss their rippled manes
Shining and soft as silken skeins;
Wagons and gigs are ranged about,
And fashion flaunts her gay turn-out;
Here stands—each youthful Jehu's dream—
The jointed tandem, ticklish team!
And there in ampler breadth expand
The splendors of the four-in-hand;
On faultless ties and glossy tiles
The lovely bonnets beam their smiles;
(The style's the man, so books avow;
The style's the woman, anyhow);
From flounces frothed with creamy lace
Peeps out the pug-dog's smutty face,
Or spaniel rolls his liquid eye,
Or stares the wiry pet of Skye,—
O woman, in your hours of ease
So shy with us, so free with these![4]

"Come on! I'll bet you two to one
I'll make him do it!" "Will you? Done!"

What was it who was bound to do?
I did not hear and can't tell you,—
Pray listen till my story's through.
Scarce noticed, back behind the rest,
By cart and wagon rudely prest,
The parson's lean and bony bay
Stood harnessed in his one-horse shay—
Lent to his sexton for the day;
(A funeral—so the sexton said;
His mother's uncle's wife was dead).

Like Lazarus bid to Dives' feast,[5]
So looked the poor forlorn old beast;
His coat was rough, his tail was bare,
The gray was sprinkled in his hair;
Sportsmen and jockeys knew him not
And yet they say he once could trot
Among the fleetest of the town,

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[3] Dorothy Quincy married Edward Jackson.

[1] gray mare

[2] sorrel horse

[3] bay gelding (Budd Doble was a man well known in racing circles as was probably Dan Pfeiffer.)

[4] A parody on the lines in Scott's *Marmion* vi. 30:

> O, woman! in our hours of ease
> Uncertain, coy, and hard to please.

[5] Lazarus ate only the crumbs from Dives' table. *Luke* xvi. 21.

Till something cracked and broke him down,—
The steed's, the statesman's, common lot!
"And are we then so soon forgot?"
Ah me! I doubt if one of you
Has ever heard the name "Old Blue,"
Whose fame through all this region rung
In those old days when I was young!

"Bring forth the horse!"[6] Alas! he showed
Not like the one Mazeppa rode;
Scant-maned, sharp-backed, and shaky-kneed,
The wreck of what was once a steed,
Lips thin, eyes hollow, stiff in joints;
Yet not without his knowing points.
The sexton laughing in his sleeve,
As if 't were all a make-believe,
Led forth the horse, and as he laughed
Unhitched the breeching from a shaft,
Unclasped the rusty belt beneath,
Drew forth the snaffle from his teeth,
Slipped off his head-stall, set him free
From strap and rein,—a sight to see!

So worn, so lean in every limb,
It can't be they are saddling him!
It is! his back the pig-skin strides
And flaps his lank, rheumatic sides;
With look of mingled scorn and mirth
They buckle round the saddle-girth;
With horsy wink and saucy toss
A youngster throws his leg across,
And so, his rider on his back,
They lead him, limping, to the track,
Far up behind the starting-point,
To limber out each stiffened joint.

As through the jeering crowd he past,
One pitying look old Hiram cast;
"Go it, ye cripple, while ye can!"
Cried out unsentimental Dan;
"A Fast-Day dinner for the crows!"
Budd Doble's scoffing shout arose.

Slowly, as when the walking-beam
First feels the gathering head of steam,
With warning cough and threatening wheeze
The stiff old charger crooks his knees;
At first with cautious step sedate,
As if he dragged a coach of state;
He's not a colt; he knows full well
That time is weight and sure to tell;
No horse so sturdy but he fears
The handicap of twenty years.

As through the throng on either hand
The old horse nears the judges' stand,
Beneath his jockey's feather-weight
He warms a little to his gait,
And now and then a step is tried
That hints of something like a stride.

"Go!"—Through his ear the summons stung
As if a battle-trump had rung;
The slumbering instincts long unstirred
Start at the old familiar word;
It thrills like flame through every limb—
What mean his twenty years to him?
The savage blow his rider dealt
Fell on his hollow flanks unfelt;
The spur that pricked his staring hide
Unheeded tore his bleeding side;
Alike to him are spur and rein,—
He steps a five-year-old again!

Before the quarter pole was past,
Old Hiram said, "He's going fast."
Long ere the quarter was a half,
The chuckling crowd had ceased to laugh;
Tighter his frightened jockey clung
As in a mighty stride he swung,
The gravel flying in his track,
His neck stretched out, his ears laid back,
His tail extended all the while
Behind him like a rat-tail file!
Off went a shoe,—away it spun,
Shot like a bullet from a gun;
The quaking jockey shapes a prayer
From scraps of oaths he used to swear;
He drops his whip, he drops his rein,
He clutches fiercely for a mane;
He'll lose his hold—he sways and reels—
He'll slide beneath those trampling heels!
The knees of many a horseman quake,
The flowers on many a bonnet shake,
And shouts arise from left and right,
"Stick on! Stick on!" "Hould tight! Hould tight!"
"Cling round his neck and don't let go—
That pace can't hold—there! steady! whoa!"
But like the sable steed that bore
The spectral lover of Lenore,[7]
His nostrils snorting foam and fire,
No stretch his bony limbs can tire;
And now the stand he rushes by,
And "Stop him!—stop him!" is the cry.

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[6] Byron's *Mazeppa*, 9:
" 'Bring forth the horse!'—the horse was brought;
In truth, he was a noble steed . . .
Who looked as though the speed of thought
Were in his limbs";

[7] In the ballad *Lenore* by the German poet Bürger (1748-1794) the heroine is borne away by a specter lover on a specter steed. The same story is told in Scott's *William and Helen.*

Stand back! he's only just begun—
He's having out three heats in one!

"Don't rush in front! he'll smash your brains;
But follow up and grab the reins!"
Old Hiram spoke. Dan Pfeiffer heard,
And sprang impatient at the word;
Budd Doble started on his bay,
Old Hiram followed on his gray,
And off they spring, and round they go,
The fast ones doing "all they know."
Look! twice they follow at his heels,
As round the circling course he wheels,
And whirls with him that clinging boy
Like Hector round the walls of Troy;[8]
Still on, and on, the third time round!
They're tailing off! they're losing ground!
Budd Doble's nag begins to fail!
Dan Pfeiffer's sorrel whisks his tail!
And see! in spite of whip and shout,
Old Hiram's mare is giving out!
Now for the finish! at the turn,
The old horse—all the rest astern—
Comes swinging in, with easy trot;
By Jove! he's distanced all the lot!

That trot no mortal could explain;
Some said, "Old Dutchman[9] come again!"
Some took his time,—at least they tried,
But what it was could none decide;
One said he couldn't understand
What happened to his second hand;
One said 2:10; *that* couldn't be—
More like two twenty-two or -three;
Old Hiram settled it at last;
"The time was two—too dee-vel-ish fast!"

The parson's horse had won the bet;
It cost him something of a sweat;
Back in the one-horse shay he went;
The parson wondered what it meant,
And murmured, with a mild surprise
And pleasant twinkle of the eyes,
"That funeral must have been a trick,
Or corpses drive at double-quick;
I shouldn't wonder, I declare,
If brother Jehu made the prayer!"

And this is all I have to say
About the parson's poor old bay,
The same that drew the one-hoss shay.

Moral for which this tale is told:
A horse *can* trot, for all he's old.
1876 1876

From THE AUTOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST-TABLE[1]

EVERY MAN HIS OWN BOSWELL[2]

From I

I was just going to say, when I was interrupted, that one of the many ways of classifying minds is under the heads of arithmetical and algebraical intellects. All economical and practical wisdom is an extension or variation of the following arithmetical formula: $2+2=4$. Every philosophical proposition has the more general character of the expression $a+b=c$. We are mere operatives, empirics, and egotists, until we learn to think in letters instead of figures.

They all stared. There is a divinity student lately come among us to whom I commonly address remarks like the above, allowing him to take a certain share in the conversation, so far as assent or pertinent questions are involved. He abused his liberty on this occasion by presuming to say that Leibnitz[3] had the same observation.—No, sir, I replied, he has not. But he said a mighty good thing about mathematics, that sounds something like it, and you found it, *not in the original,* but quoted by Dr. Thomas Reid.[4] I will tell the company what he did say, one of these days.

——If I belong to a Society of Mutual Admiration?—I blush to say that I do not at this present moment. I once did, however. It was the first association to which I ever heard the term applied; a body of scientific young men in a great foreign city[5] who admired their teacher, and to some extent each other. Many of them deserved it; they have become famous since. It amuses me to hear the talk of one of those beings described by Thackeray—

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[8] *Iliad* xxii.

[9] A champion American trotter.

[1] Holmes in his introduction wrote: "The interruption referred to in the first sentence of the first of these papers was just a quarter of a century in duration. Two articles entitled *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* will be found in the *New England Magazine,* formerly published in Boston by J. T. and E. Buckingham. The date of the first of these articles is November, 1831, and that of the second February, 1832. When *The Atlantic Monthly* was begun, twenty-five years afterwards, and the author was asked to write for it, the recollection of these crude products of his uncombed literary boyhood suggested the thought that it would be a curious experiment to shake the same bough again, and see if the ripe fruit were better or worse than the early windfalls. So began this series of papers, ..."

[2] Biographer of Dr. Samuel Johnson. His success lay largely in the minuteness of detail with which he recorded Johnson's life, especially his conversation.

[3] A German philosopher and mathematician (1646-1716).

[4] A Scottish philosopher (1710-1796).

[5] "The 'body of scientific young men in a great foreign city' was the Société d'Observation Medicale, of Paris, of which M. Louis was president, and MM. Barth, Grisotte, and our own Dr. Bowditch were members. They agreed in admiring their justly-honored president, and thought highly of some of their

> Letters four do form his name[6]

about a social development which belongs to the very noblest stage of civilization. All generous companies of artists, authors, philanthropists, men of science, are, or ought to be, Societies of Mutual Admiration. A man of genius, or any kind of superiority, is not debarred from admiring the same quality in another, nor the other from returning his admiration. They may even associate together and continue to think highly of each other. And so of a dozen such men, if any one place is fortunate enough to hold so many. The being referred to above assumes several false premises. First, that men of talent necessarily hate each other. Secondly, that intimate knowledge or habitual association destroys our admiration of persons whom we esteemed highly at a distance. Thirdly, that a circle of clever fellows, who meet together to dine and have a good time, have signed a constitutional compact to glorify themselves and to put down him and the fraction of the human race not belonging to their number. Fourthly, that it is an outrage that he is not asked to join them.

Here the company laughed a good deal, and the old gentleman who sits opposite said: "That's it! that's it!"

I continued, for I was in the talking vein. As to clever people's hating each other, I think *a little* extra talent does sometimes make people jealous. They become irritated by perpetual attempts and failures, and it hurts their tempers and dispositions. Unpretending mediocrity is good, and genius is glorious; but a weak flavor of genius in an essentially common person is detestable. It spoils the grand neutrality of a commonplace character, as the rinsings of an unwashed wineglass spoil a draught of fair water. No wonder the poor fellow we spoke of, who always belongs to this class of slightly flavored mediocrities, is puzzled and vexed by the strange sight of a dozen men of capacity working and playing together in harmony. He and his fellows are always fighting. With them familiarity naturally breeds contempt. If they ever praise each other's bad drawings, or broken-winded novels, or spavined verses, nobody ever supposed it was from admiration; it was simply a contract between themselves and a publisher or dealer.

If the Mutuals have really nothing among them worth admiring, that alters the question. But if they are men with noble powers and qualities, let me tell you, that, next to youthful love and family affections, there is no human sentiment better than that which unites the Societies of Mutual Admiration. And what would literature or art be without such associations? Who can tell what we owe to the Mutual Admiration Society of which Shakspere, and Ben Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher were members?[7] Or to that of which Addison and Steele formed the center, and which gave us the Spectator? Or to that where Johnson, and Goldsmith, and Burke, and Reynolds, and Beauclerk, and Boswell, most admiring among all admirers, met together? Was there any great harm in the fact that the Irvings and Paulding wrote in company? or any unpardonable cabal in the literary union of Verplanck and Bryant and Sands,[8] and as many more as they chose to associate with them?

The poor creature does not know what he is talking about when he abuses this noblest of institutions. Let him inspect its mysteries through the knot-hole he has secured, but not use that orifice as a medium for his popgun. Such a society is the crown of a literary metropolis; if a town has not material

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associates, who have since made good their promise of distinction.

About the time when these papers were published, the Saturday Club was founded, or, rather, found itself in existence, without any organization, almost without parentage. It was natural enough that such men as Emerson, Longfellow, Agassiz, Peirce, with Hawthorne, Motley, Sumner, when within reach, and others who would be good company for them, should meet and dine together once in a while, as they did, in point of fact, every month, and as some who are still living, with other and newer members, still meet and dine. If some of them had not admired each other they would have been exceptions in the world of letters and science." . . . . Holmes's note in *Riverside Literature Series* edition.

[6] "Thackeray wreaked his wrath on the *snob*, but Dr. Holmes has applied to this 'quadriliteral person' to use De Quincey's phrase, a line from a malignant satire by Coleridge on Pitt." *Riverside Literature Series* edition.

[7] The Elizabethan dramatists met frequently a the Mermaid Tavern; Addison, Steele, and their friends met at Button's Coffee House; Dr. Samuel Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, Edmund Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds the painter Beauclerk, the friend of Johnson, and Boswell Johnson's biographer, were all members o The Literary Club in London during the last half of the eighteenth century.

[8] Washington Irving, his brother William, and their brother-in-law, James K. Paulding, together edited *Salmagundi* in New York in 1807 1808. Gulian C. Verplanck, an American author, Robert C. Sands, and William Cullen Bryant issued an annual called *The Talisman* in 1827-30.

for it, and spirit and good feeling enough to organize it, it is a mere caravansary, fit for a man of genius to lodge in, but not to live in. Foolish people hate and dread and envy such an association of men of varied powers and influence, because it is lofty, serene, impregnable, and, by the necessity of the case, exclusive. Wise ones are prouder of the title M. S. M. A. than of all their other honors put together

. . . .

From II

. . . .

——Have I ever acted in private theatricals? Often. I have played the part of the "Poor Gentleman," before a great many audiences,—more, I trust, than I shall ever face again. I did not wear a stage-costume, nor a wig, nor mustaches of burnt cork; but I was placarded and announced as a public performer, and at the proper hour I came forward with the ballet-dancer's smile upon my countenance, and made my bow and acted my part. I have seen my name stuck up in letters so big that I was ashamed to show myself in the place by daylight. I have gone to a town with a sober literary essay in my pocket, and seen myself everywhere announced as the most desperate of *buffos*,[9]—one who was obliged to restrain himself in the full exercise of his powers, from prudential considerations. I have been through as many hardships as Ulysses, in the pursuit of my histrionic vocation.[10] I have traveled in cars until the conductors all knew me like a brother. I have run off the rails, and stuck all night in snow-drifts, and sat behind females that would have the window open when one could not wink without his eyelids freezing together. Perhaps I shall give you some of my experiences one of these days;—I will not now, for I have something else for you.

Private theatricals, as I have figured in them in country lyceum-halls, are one thing,—and private theatricals, as they may be seen in certain gilded and frescoed saloons of our metropolis, are another. Yes, it is pleasant to see real gentlemen and ladies, who do not think it necessary to mouth, and rant, and stride, like most of our stage heroes and heroines, in the characters which show off their graces and talents; most of all to see a fresh, unrouged, unspoiled, highbred young maiden, with a lithe figure, and a pleasant voice, acting in those love-dramas which make us young again to look upon, when real youth and beauty will play them for us.

——Of course I wrote the prologue I was asked to write. I did not see the play, though. I knew there was a young lady in it, and that somebody was in love with her, and she was in love with him, and somebody (an old tutor, I believe) wanted to interfere, and, very naturally, the young lady was too sharp for him. The play of course ends charmingly; there is a general reconciliation, and all concerned form a line and take each others' hands, as people always do after they have made up their quarrels,—and then the curtain falls,—if it does not stick, as it commonly does at private theatrical exhibitions, in which case a boy is detailed to pull it down, which he does, blushing violently.

Now, then, for my prologue. I am not going to change my cæsuras and cadences for anybody; so if you do not like the heroic, or iambic trimeter brachycatalectic,[11] you had better not wait to hear it.

This Is It

A Prologue? Well, of course the ladies know;—
I have my doubts. No matter,—here we go!
What is a Prologue? Let our Tutor teach:
Pro means beforehand; *logos* stands for speech.
'Tis like the harper's prelude on the strings,
The prima donna's courtesy ere she sings;—
Prologues in meter are to other *pros*
As worsted stockings are to engine-hose.

"The world's a stage,"—as Shakspere said, one day;
The stage a world—was what he meant to say.
The outside world's a blunder, that is clear;
The real world that Nature meant is here.
Here every foundling finds its lost mamma;
Each rogue, repentant, melts his stern papa;
Misers relent, the spendthrift's debts are paid,
The cheats are taken in the traps they laid;
One after one the troubles all are past
Till the fifth act comes right side up at last,
When the young couple, old folks, rogues, and all,
Join hands, *so* happy at the curtain's fall.
—Here suffering virtue ever finds relief,
And black-browed ruffians always come to grief,
—When the lorn damsel, with a frantic speech,
And cheeks as hueless as a brandy-peach,

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[9] comic actors in Italian opera

[10] Ulysses wandered twenty years. Holmes was much in demand as a public lecturer; he here jocosely refers to some of the hardships of a lecture-bureau traveler of the mid-nineteenth century in America.

[11] Jocosely pedantic for iambic pentameter.

Cries, ''Help, kyind Heaven!'' and drops upon her knees
On the green—baize,—beneath the (canvas) trees,—
See to her side avenging Valor fly:—
''Ha! Villain! Draw! Now, Terraitorr, yield or die!''
—When the poor hero flounders in despair,
Some dear lost uncle turns up millionaire,—
Clasps the young scapegrace with paternal joy,
Sobs on his neck, ''*My boy!* MY BOY!! MY BOY!!!''

Ours, then, sweet friends, the real world to-night
Of love that conquers in disaster's spite.
Ladies, attend! While woful cares and doubt
Wrong the soft passion in the world without,
Though fortune scowl, though prudence interfere,
One thing is certain: Love will triumph here!

Lords of creation, whom your ladies rule,—
The world's great masters, when you're out of school,—
Learn the brief moral of our evening's play:
Man has his will,—but woman has her way!
While man's dull spirit toils in smoke and fire,
Woman's swift instinct threads the electric wire,—
The magic bracelet stretched beneath the waves
Beats the black giant with his score of slaves.
All earthly powers confess your sovereign art
But that one rebel,—woman's wilful heart.
All foes you master; but a woman's wit
Lets daylight through you ere you know you're hit.
So, just to picture what her art can do,
Hear an old story made as good as new.

Rudolph, professor of the headsman's trade,
Alike was famous for his arm and blade.
One day a prisoner Justice had to kill
Knelt at the block to test the artist's skill.
Bare-armed, swart-visaged, gaunt, and shaggy-browed,
Rudolph the headsman rose above the crowd.
His falchion lightened with a sudden gleam,
As the pike's armor flashes in the stream.
He sheathed his blade; he turned as if to go;
The victim knelt, still waiting for the blow.
''Why strikest not? Perform thy murderous act,''
The prisoner said. (His voice was slightly cracked.)

''Friend, I *have* struck,'' the artist straight replied;
''Wait but one moment, and yourself decide.''
He held his snuff-box,—''Now then, if you please!''
The prisoner sniffed, and, with a crashing sneeze,
Off his head tumbled,—bowled along the floor,—
Bounced down the steps;—the prisoner said no more!

Woman! thy falchion is a glittering eye;
If death lurks in it, oh, how sweet to die!
Thou takest hearts as Rudolph took the head;
We die with love, and never dream we're dead!

The prologue went off very well, as I hear. No alterations were suggested by the lady to whom it was sent, so far as I know. Sometimes people criticize the poems one sends them, and suggest all sorts of improvements. Who was that silly body that wanted Burns to alter "Scots wha hae," so as to lengthen the last line, thus?—

"*Edward!*" Chains and slavery![12]

Here is a little poem I sent a short time since to a committee for a certain celebration. I understood that it was to be a festive and convivial occasion, and ordered myself accordingly. It seems the president of the day was what is called a "teetotaller." I received a note from him in the following words, containing the copy subjoined, with the emendations annexed to it.

"Dear Sir,—Your poem gives good satisfaction to the committee. The sentiments expressed with reference to liquor are not, however, those generally entertained by this community. I have therefore consulted the clergyman of this place, who has made some slight changes, which he thinks will remove all objections, and keep the valuable portions of the poem. Please to inform me of your charge for said poem. Our means are limited, etc., etc., etc.

"Yours with respect."

Here It Is.—With the Slight Alterations

Come! fill a fresh bumper,—for why should we go
logwood
While the ~~nectar~~ still reddens our cups as they flow!
decoction
Pour out the ~~rich juices~~ still bright with the sun,
dye-stuff
Till o'er the brimmed crystal the ~~rubies~~ shall run.

half-ripened apples
The ~~purple-globed clusters~~ their life-dews have bled;

---

[12] Mr. George Thomson, whom Burns aided in preparing a collection of songs, caused *Bannockburn* to be set to the tune *Lewie Gordon* which required two more syllables in each fourth line; but Burns preferred his first draft set to the tune *"Hey, Tutti, Taitie,"* and after the song was published this tune was generally used.

taste sugar of lead
How sweet is the ~~breath~~ of the ~~fragrance they~~
~~shed!~~
rank poisons wines!!!
For summer's ~~last roses~~ lie hid in the ~~wines~~
stable-boys smok-
That were garnered by ~~maidens who laughed~~
ing long-nines.
~~through the vines.~~

scowl howl scoff
Then a ~~smile,~~ and a ~~glass,~~ and a ~~toast,~~ and a
sneer
~~cheer,~~
strychnine and whisky, and ratsbane and
For ~~all the good wine, and we've some of it~~
beer
~~here~~
In cellar, in pantry, in attic, in hall,
Down, down, with the tyrant that masters
~~Long live the gay servant that laughs for us~~
us all!
~~all!~~

The company said I had been shabbily treated, and advised me to charge the committee double,—which I did. But as I never got my pay, I don't know that it made much difference. I am a very particular person about having all I write printed as I write it. I require to see a proof, a revise, a re-revise, and a double re-revise, or fourth-proof rectified impression of all my productions, especially verse. A misprint kills a sensitive author. An intentional change of his text murders him. No wonder so many poets die young!

I have nothing more to report at this time, except two pieces of advice I gave to the young women at table. One relates to a vulgarism of language, which I grieve to say is sometimes heard even from female lips, the other is of more serious purport, and applies to such as contemplate a change of condition,—matrimony, in fact.

—The woman who "calc'lates" is lost.

—Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust.

From III

[The *Atlantic* obeys the moon, and its LUNIVERSARY has come round again. I have gathered up some hasty notes of my remarks made since the last high tides, which I respectfully submit. Please to remember this is *talk;* just as easy and just as formal as I choose to make it.]

——I never saw an author in my life—saving, perhaps, one—that did not purr as audibly as a full-grown domestic cat, (*Felis Catus*, LINN.,) on having his fur smoothed in the right way by a skilful hand.

But let me give you a caution. Be very careful how you tell an author he is *droll.* Ten to one he will hate you; and if he does, be sure he can do you a mischief, and very probably will. Say you *cried* over his romance or his verses, and he will love you and send you a copy. You can laugh over that as much as you like—in private.

——Wonder why authors and actors are ashamed of being funny?—Why, there are obvious reasons, and deep philosophical ones. The clown knows very well that the women are not in love with him, but with Hamlet, the fellow in the black cloak and plumed hat. Passion never laughs. The wit knows that his place is at the tail of a procession.

If you want the deep underlying reason, I must take more time to tell it. There is a perfect consciousness in every form of wit—using that term in its general sense—that its essence consists in a partial and incomplete view of whatever it touches. It throws a single ray, separated from the rest,—red, yellow, blue, or any intermediate shade,—upon an object; never white light; that is the province of wisdom. We get beautiful effects from wit,—all the prismatic colors,—but never the object as it is in fair daylight. A pun, which is a kind of wit, is a different and much shallower trick in mental optics throwing the *shadows* of two objects so that one overlies the other. Poetry uses the rainbow tints for special effects, but always keeps its essential object in the purest white light of truth.—Will you allow me to pursue this subject a little further?

[They didn't allow me at that time, for somebody happened to scrape the floor with his chair just then; which accidental sound, as all must have noticed, has the instantaneous effect that the cutting of the yellow hair by Iris had upon infelix Dido.[13] It broke the charm, and that breakfast was over.]

——Don't flatter yourselves that friendship authorizes you to say disagreeable things to your intimates. On the contrary, the nearer you come into relation with a person, the more necessary do tact and courtesy become. Except in cases of necessity, which are rare, leave your friend to learn unpleasant truths from his enemies; they are

[13] Proserpina, the goddess of the dead, was supposed to release the spirit from the body by cutting a lock from the hair of the dying person. The unhappy Dido, however, was released not by Proserpina but by Iris, a messenger of the gods. *Æneid* iv. 700-705.

ready enough to tell them. Good-breeding *never* forgets that *amour-propre*[14] is universal. When you read the story of the Archbishop and Gil Blas, you may laugh, if you will, at the poor old man's delusion; but don't forget that the youth was the greater fool of the two, and that his master served such a booby rightly in turning him out of doors.

——You need not get up a rebellion against what I say, if you find everything in my sayings is not exactly new. You can't possibly mistake a man who means to be honest for a literary pickpocket. I once read an introductory lecture that looked to me too learned for its latitude. On examination, I found all its erudition was taken ready-made from D'Israeli.[15] If I had been ill-natured, I should have shown up the little great man, who had once belabored me in his feeble way. But one can generally tell these wholesale thieves easily enough, and they are not worth the trouble of putting them in the pillory. I doubt the entire novelty of my remarks just made on telling unpleasant truths, yet I am not conscious of any larceny.

Neither make too much of flaws and occasional overstatements. Some persons seem to think that absolute truth, in the form of rigidly stated propositions, is all that conversation admits. This is precisely as if a musician should insist on having nothing but perfect chords and simple melodies,—no diminished fifths, no flat sevenths, no flourishes, on any account. Now it is fair to say, that, just as music must have all these, so conversation must have its partial truths, its embellished truths, its exaggerated truths. It is in its higher forms an artistic product, and admits the ideal element as much as pictures or statues. One man who is a little too literal can spoil the talk of a whole tableful of men of *esprit*.—"Yes," you say, "but who wants to hear fanciful people's nonsense? Put the facts to it, and then see where it is!"—Certainly, if a man is too fond of paradox,—if he is flighty and empty,—if instead of striking those fifths and sevenths, those harmonious discords, often so much better than the twinned octaves, in the music of thought,—if, instead of striking these, he jangles the chords, stick a fact into him like a stiletto. But remember that talking is one of the fine arts,—the noblest, the most important, and the most difficult,—and that its fluent harmonies may be spoiled by the intrusion of a single harsh note. Therefore conversation which is suggestive rather than argumentative, which lets out the most of each talker's results of thought, is commonly the pleasantest and the most profitable. It is not easy, at the best, for two persons talking together to make the most of each other's thoughts, there are so many of them.

[The company looked as if they wanted an explanation.]

When John and Thomas, for instance, are talking together, it is natural enough that among the six there should be more or less confusion and misapprehension.

[Our landlady turned pale;—no doubt she thought there was a screw loose in my intellects,—and that involved the probable loss of a boarder. A severe-looking person, who wears a Spanish cloak and a sad cheek, fluted by the passions of the melodrama, whom I understand to be the professional ruffian of the neighboring theater, alluded, with a certain lifting of the brow, drawing down of the corners of the mouth and somewhat rasping *voce di petto*,[16] to Falstaff's nine men in buckram. Everybody looked up. I believe the old gentleman opposite was afraid I should seize the carving-knife; at any rate, he slid it to one side, as it were carelessly.]

I think, I said, I can make it plain to Benjamin Franklin here, that there are at least six personalities distinctly to be recognized as taking part in that dialogue between John and Thomas.

Three Johns
1. The real John; known only to his Maker.
2. John's ideal John; never the real one, and often very unlike him.
3. Thomas's ideal John; never the real John, nor John's John, but often very unlike either.

Three Thomases
1. The real Thomas.
2. Thomas's ideal Thomas.
3. John's ideal Thomas.

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[14] Self-love; vanity. Gil Blas, mentioned below, the hero of the novel by Le Sage (1668-1747) flatters his employer, the vain archbishop, and is given every privilege. He is promised a life-pension if he will tell the archbishop when the latter begins to fail as a preacher. When he frankly tells the truth, he is dismissed from service.

[15] Probably Isaac D'Israeli, 1766-1848, the father of the statesman Benjamin Disraeli and author of *Curiosities of Literature* and other miscellaneous works.

[16] Chest tone. Falstaff, having run away from a fight, later maintains that he killed two men dressed in buckram suits. He gradually increases the number he fought to eleven. 1 *Henry* IV. II. iv.

Only one of the three Johns is taxed; only one can be weighed on a platform-balance; but the other two are just as important in the conversation. Let us suppose the real John to be old, dull, and ill-looking. But as the Higher Powers have not conferred on men the gift of seeing themselves in the true light, John very possibly conceives himself to be youthful, witty, and fascinating, and talks from the point of view of this ideal. Thomas, again, believes him to be an artful rogue, we will say; therefore he *is*, so far as Thomas's attitude in the conversation is concerned, an artful rogue, though really simple and stupid. The same conditions apply to the three Thomases. It follows, that, until a man can be found who knows himself as his Maker knows him, or who sees himself as others see him, there must be at least six persons engaged in every dialogue between two. Of these, the least important, philosophically speaking, is the one that we have called the real person. No wonder two disputants often get angry, when there are six of them talking and listening all at the same time.

[A very unphilosophical application of the above remarks was made by a young fellow answering to the name of John, who sits near me at table. A certain basket of peaches, a rare vegetable, little known to boarding-houses, was on its way to me *viâ* this unlettered Johannes. He appropriated the three that remained in the basket, remarking that there was just one apiece for him. I convinced him that his practical inference was hasty and illogical, but in the mean time he had eaten the peaches.]

. . . .

From IV

. . . .

No, no!—give me a chance to talk to you, my fellow-boarders, and you need not be afraid that I shall have any scruples about entertaining you, if I can do it, as well as giving you some of my serious thoughts, and perhaps my sadder fancies. I know nothing in English or any other literature more admirable than that sentiment of Sir Thomas Browne:[17] "EVERY MAN TRULY LIVES, SO LONG AS HE ACTS HIS NATURE, OR SOME WAY MAKES GOOD THE FACULTIES OF HIMSELF."

I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving. To reach the port of heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it,—but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor. There is one very sad thing in old friendships, to every mind that is really moving onward. It is this: that one cannot help using his early friends as the seaman uses the log, to mark his progress. Every now and then we throw an old schoolmate over the stern with a string of thought tied to him, and look—I am afraid with a kind of luxurious and sanctimonious compassion—to see the rate at which the string reels off, while he lies there bobbing up and down, poor fellow! and we are dashing along with the white foam and bright sparkle at our bows;—the ruffled bosom of prosperity and progress, with a sprig of diamonds stuck in it! But this is only the sentimental side of the matter; for grow we must, if we outgrow all that we love.

Don't misunderstand that metaphor of heaving the log, I beg you. It is merely a smart way of saying that we cannot avoid measuring our rate of movement by those with whom we have long been in the habit of comparing ourselves; and when they once become stationary, we can get our reckoning from them with painful accuracy. We see just what we were when they were our peers, and can strike the balance between that and whatever we may feel ourselves to be now. No doubt we may sometimes be mistaken. If we change our last simile to that very old and familiar one of a fleet leaving the harbor and sailing in company for some distant region, we can get what we want out of it. There is one of our companions;—her streamers were torn into rags before she had got into the open sea, then by-and-by her sails blew out of the ropes one after another, the waves swept her deck, and as night came on we left her a seeming wreck, as we flew under our pyramid of canvas. But lo! at dawn she is still in sight,—it may be in advance of us. Some deep ocean-current has been moving her on, strong, but silent,—yes, stronger than these noisy winds that puff our sails until they are swollen as the cheeks of jubilant cherubim. And when at last the black steam-tug with the skeleton arms, which comes out of the mist sooner or later and takes us all in tow, grapples her and goes off panting and groaning with her, it is to that harbor where all wrecks are refitted, and where, alas! we, towering in our pride, may never come.

So you will not think I mean to speak lightly of old friendships, because we cannot help instituting comparisons between our present and former selves by the aid of those who were what we were, but are not what we are. Nothing strikes one more, in the race of life, than to see how many give out in the first half of the course. "Commencement day" always reminds me of the start for the "Derby,"[18] when the beautiful high-bred three-year olds of the season are brought up for trial. That day is the start, and life is the race. Here we are at Cambridge, and a class is just "graduating." Poor Harry! he was to have been there too, but he has paid forfeit; step out here into the grass back of the church; ah! there it is:—

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[17] An English physician and author (1605-1682).

"HUNC LAPIDEM POSUERUNT
SOCII MŒRENTES."[19]

But this is the start, and here they are,—coats bright as silk, and manes as smooth as *eau lustrale*[20] can make them. Some of the best of the colts are pranced round, a few minutes each, to show their paces. What is that old gentleman crying about? and the old lady by him, and the three girls, what are they all covering their eyes for? Oh, that is *their* colt which has just been trotted up on the stage. Do they really think those little thin legs can do anything in such a slashing sweepstakes as is coming off in these next forty years? Oh, this terrible gift of second-sight that comes to some of us when we begin to look through the silvered rings of the *arcus senilis!*[21]

Ten years gone. First turn in the race. A few broken down; two or three bolted. Several show in advance of the ruck. *Cassock,* a black colt, seems to be ahead of the rest; those black colts commonly get the start, I have noticed, of the others, in the first quarter. *Meteor* has pulled up.

Twenty years. Second corner turned. *Cassock* has dropped from the front, and *Judex,* an iron-gray, has the lead. But look! how they have thinned out? Down flat,—five,—six,—how many? They lie still enough! they will not get up again in this race, be very sure! And the rest of them, what a "tailing off!" Anybody can see who is going to win,—perhaps.

Thirty years. Third corner turned. *Dives,* bright sorrel, ridden by the fellow in a yellow jacket, begins to make play fast; is getting to be the favorite, with many. But who is that other one that has been lengthening his stride from the first, and now shows close up to the front? Don't you remember the quiet brown colt *Asteroid,* with the star in his forehead? That is he; he is one of the sort that lasts; look out for him! The black "colt," as we used to call him, is in the background, taking it easily in a gentle trot. There is one they used to call *the Filly,* on account of a certain feminine air he had; well up, you see; the Filly is not to be despised, my boy!

Forty years. More dropping off,—but places much as before.

Fifty years. Race over. All that are on the course are coming in at a walk; no more running. Who is ahead? Ahead? What! and the winning-post a slab of white or gray stone standing out from that turf where there is no more jockeying or straining for victory! Well, the world marks their places in its betting-book; but be sure that these matter very little, if they have run as well as they knew how!

——Did I not say to you a little while ago that the universe swam in an ocean of similitudes and analogies? I will not quote Cowley,[22] or Burns, or Wordsworth, just now, to show you what thoughts were suggested to them by the simplest natural objects, such as a flower or a leaf; but I will read you a few lines, if you do not object, suggested by looking at a section of one of those chambered shells to which is given the name of Pearly Nautilus. We need not trouble ourselves about the distinction between this and the Paper Nautilus, the *Argonauta*[23] of the ancients. The name applied to both shows that each has long been compared to a ship, as you may see more fully in Webster's Dictionary, or the "Encyclopedia," to which he refers. If you will look into Roget's Bridgewater Treatise,[24] you will find a figure of one of these shells and a section of it. The last will show you the series of enlarging compartments successively dwelt in by the animal that inhabits the shell, which is built in a widening spiral. Can you find no lesson in this?

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
    Sails the unshadowed main,—
    The venturous bark that flings

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[18] The annual horse race held in May or June at Epsom, southwest of London, and named for its founder, the 12th Earl of Derby.

[19] "Mourning friends have erected this stone."

[20] Water used in ceremonies of purification.

[21] Bow of old age—opaqueness of the edge of the cornea usual in old age.

[22] Abraham Cowley, an English poet.

[23] A species of mollusks.

[24] The Earl of Bridgewater (1758-1829) bequeathed £8,000 for the publishing of works "on the Goodness of God as manifested in the Creation." Dr. P. M. Roget, 1779-1869, wrote on *Animal and Vegetable Physiology.*

On the sweet summer wind its purpled wings
In gulfs enchanted, where the siren sings,
And coral reefs lie bare,
Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,—
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed!

Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
Child of the wandering sea,
Cast from her lap forlorn!
From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
Than ever Triton blew from wreathed horn![25]
While on mine ear it rings,
Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that sings:—

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea!

From VI

. . . .

——Every person's feelings have a front-door and a side-door by which they may be entered. The front-door is on the street. Some keep it always open; some keep it latched; some, locked; some, bolted,—with a chain that will let you peep in, but not get in; and some nail it up, so that nothing can pass its threshold. This front-door leads into a passage which opens into an anteroom and this into the interior apartments. The side-door opens at once into the sacred chambers.

There is almost always at least one key to this side-door. This is carried for years hidden in a mother's bosom. Fathers, brothers, sisters, and friends, often, but by no means so universally, have duplicates of it. The wedding-ring conveys a right to one; alas, if none is given with it!

If nature or accident has put one of these keys into the hands of a person who has the torturing instinct, I can only solemnly pronounce the words that Justice utters over its doomed victim,—*The Lord have mercy on your soul!* You will probably go mad within a reasonable time,—or, if you are a man, run off and die with your head on a curb-stone, in Melbourne or San Francisco,—or, if you are a woman, quarrel and break your heart, or turn into a pale, jointed petrifaction that moves about as if it were alive, or play some real life-tragedy or other.

Be very careful to whom you trust one of these keys of the side-door. The fact of possessing one renders those even who are dear to you very terrible at times. You can keep the world out from your front-door, or receive visitors only when you are ready for them; but those of your own flesh and blood, or of certain grades of intimacy, can come in at the side-door, if they will, at any hour and in any mood. Some of them have a scale of your whole nervous system, and can play all the gamut of your sensibilities in semitones,—touching the naked nerve-pulps as a pianist strikes the keys of his instrument. I am satisfied that there are as great masters of this nerve-playing as Vieuxtemps[26] or Thalberg in their lines of performance. Married life is the school in which the most accomplished artists in this department are found. A delicate woman is the best instrument; she has such a magnificent compass of sensibilities! From the deep inward moan which follows pressure on the great nerves of right, to the sharp cry as the filaments of taste are struck with a crashing sweep, is a range which no other instrument possesses. A few exercises on it daily at home fit a man wonderfully for his habitual labors, and refresh him immensely as he returns from them. No stranger can get a great many notes of torture out of a human soul; it takes one that knows it well,—parent, child, brother, sister, intimate. Be very careful to whom you give a side-door key; too many have them already.

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[25] See the last line of Wordsworth's sonnet *The world is too much with us:*

"Or hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn."

[26] A Belgian violinist and composer, 1820-1881. Thalberg was a Swiss composer for the piano, 1812-1871.

——You remember the old story of the tender-hearted man, who placed a frozen viper in his bosom, and was stung by it when it became thawed? If we take a cold-blooded creature into our bosom, better that it should sting us and we should die than that its chill should slowly steal into our hearts; warm it we never can! I have seen faces of women that were fair to look upon, yet one could see that the icicles were forming round these women's hearts. I knew what freezing image lay on the white breasts beneath the laces!

A very simple *intellectual* mechanism answers the necessities of friendship, and even of the most intimate relations of life. If a watch tells us the hour and the minute, we can be content to carry it about with us for a lifetime, though it has no second-hand, and is not a repeater, nor a musical watch,—though it is not enameled nor jeweled,—in short, though it has little beyond the wheels required for a trustworthy instrument, added to a good face and a pair of useful hands. The more wheels there are in a watch or a brain, the more trouble they are to take care of. The movements of exaltation which belong to genius are egotistic by their very nature. A calm, clear mind, not subject to the spasms and crises which are so often met with in creative or intensely perceptive natures, is the best basis for love or friendship. —Observe, I am talking about *minds*. I won't say, the more intellect, the less capacity for loving; for that would do wrong to the understanding and reason;—but, on the other hand, that the brain often runs away with the heart's best blood, which gives the world a few pages of wisdom or sentiment or poetry, instead of making one other heart happy, I have no question.

If one's intimate in love or friendship cannot or does not share all one's intellectual tastes or pursuits, that is a small matter. Intellectual companions can be found easily in men and books. After all, if we think of it, most of the world's loves and friendships have been between people that could not read nor spell.

But to radiate the heat of the affections into a clod, which absorbs all that is poured into it, but never warms beneath the sunshine of smiles or the pressure of hand or lip,—this is the great martyrdom of sensitive beings,—most of all in that perpetual *auto da fé*[27] where young womanhood is the sacrifice.

——You noticed, perhaps, what I just said about the loves and friendships of illiterate persons,—that is, of the human race, with a few exceptions here and there. I like books,—I was born and bred among them, and have the easy feeling, when I get into their presence, that a stable-boy has among horses. I don't think I undervalue them either as companions or as instructors. But I can't help remembering that the world's great men have not commonly been great scholars, nor its great scholars great men. The Hebrew patriarchs had small libraries, I think, if any; yet they represent to our imaginations a very complete idea of manhood, and, I think, if we could ask in Abraham to dine with us men of letters next Saturday, we should feel honored by his company.

What I wanted to say about books is this: that there are times in which every active mind feels itself above any and all human books.

——I think a man must have a good opinion of himself, sir,—said the divinity-student,—who should feel himself above Shakspere at any time.

My young friend,—I replied,—the man who is never conscious of a state of feeling or of intellectual effort entirely beyond expression by any form of words whatsoever is a mere creature of language. I can hardly believe there are any such men. Why, think for a moment of the power of music. The nerves that make us alive to it spread out (so the Professor tells me) in the most sensitive region of the marrow, just where it is widening to run upwards into the hemispheres. It has its seat in the region of sense rather than of thought. Yet it produces a continuous and, as it were, logical sequence of emotional and intellectual changes; but how different from trains of thought proper! how entirely beyond the reach of symbols!—Think of human passions as compared with all phrases! Did you ever hear of a man's growing lean by the reading of *Romeo and Juliet*, or blowing his brains out because Desdemona was maligned? There are a good many symbols, even, that are more expressive than words. I remember a young wife who had to part with her husband for a time. She did not write a mournful poem; indeed, she was a silent person, and perhaps hardly said a word about it; but she quietly turned of a deep orange color with jaundice. A great many people in this world have but one form of rhetoric for their profoundest experiences,—namely, to waste away and die. When a man can *read,* his paroxysm of feeling is passing. When he can *read,* his thought has slackened its hold.—You talk about reading Shakspere, using him as an expression for the highest intellect, and you wonder that any common person should be so presumptuous as to suppose his thought can rise above the text which lies before him. But think a moment. A child's reading of Shakspere is one thing, and Coleridge's or Schlegel's[28] reading of him is another. The saturation-point of each mind differs from that of every other. But I think it is as true for the small mind which can only take up a little as for the great one which takes up much, that the suggestive trains of thought and feeling ought always to rise above—not the author, but the reader's mental version of the author, whoever he may be.

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[27] A public solemnity held by the Court of the Inquisition, the papal court for the detection and trial of heretics, at which the sentence was announced. Since the execution of the sentence immediately followed, the latter came to be known as the *auto da fé*, literally, act of faith.

I think most readers of Shakspere sometimes find themselves thrown into exalted mental conditions like those produced by music. Then they may drop the book, to pass at once into the region of thought without words. We may happen to be very dull folks, you and I, and probably are, unless there is some particular reason to suppose the contrary. But we get glimpses now and then of a sphere of spiritual possibilities, where we, dull as we are now, may sail in vast circles round the largest compass of earthly intelligences.

——I confess there are times when I feel like the friend I mentioned to you some time ago,—I hate the very sight of a book. Sometimes it becomes almost a physical necessity to talk out what is in the mind, before putting anything else into it. It is very bad to have thoughts and feelings, which were meant to come out in talk, *strike in,* as they say of some complaints that ought to show outwardly.

I always believed in life rather than in books. I suppose every day of earth, with its hundred thousand deaths and something more of births,—with its loves and hates, its triumphs and defeats, its pangs and blisses, has more of humanity in it than all the books that were ever written, put together. I believe the flowers growing at this moment send up more fragrance to heaven than was ever exhaled from all the essences ever distilled.

——Don't I read up various matters to talk about at this table or elsewhere?—No, that is the last thing I would do. I will tell you my rule. Talk about those subjects you have had long in your mind, and listen to what others say about subjects you have studied but recently. Knowledge and timber shouldn't be much used till they are seasoned.

——Physiologists and metaphysicians have had their attention turned a good deal of late to the automatic and involuntary actions of the mind. Put an idea into your intelligence and leave it there an hour, a day, a year, without ever having occasion to refer to it. When, at last, you return to it, you do not find it as it was when acquired. It has domiciliated itself, so to speak,—become at home,—entered into relations with your other thoughts, and integrated itself with the whole fabric of the mind.—Or take a simple and familiar example; Dr. Carpenter[29] has adduced it. You forget a name, in conversation,—go on talking, without making any effort to recall it,—and presently the mind evolves it by its own involuntary and unconscious action, while you were pursuing another train of thought, and the name rises of itself to your lips.

There are some curious observations I should like to make about the mental machinery, but I think we are getting rather didactic.

. . . .

From VII[30]

. . . .

As to *giving up* because the almanac or the Family Bible says that it is about time to do it, I have no intention of doing any such thing. I grant you that I burn less carbon than some years ago. I see people of my standing really good for nothing, decrepit, effete, *la lèvre inférieure déjà pendante,*[31] with what little life they have left mainly concentrated in their epigastrium. But as the disease of old age is epidemic, endemic, and sporadic, and everybody who lives long enough is sure to catch it, I am going to say, for the encouragement of such as need it, how I treat the malady in my own case.

First. As I feel, that, when I have anything to do, there is less time for it than when I was younger, I find that I give my attention more thoroughly, and use my time more economically than ever before; so that I can learn anything twice as easily as in my earlier days. I am not, therefore, afraid to attack a new study. I took up a difficult language a very few years ago with good success, and think of mathematics and metaphysics by-and-by.

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[28] Coleridge the English poet, 1772-1834, lectured on Shakspere; Schlegel, the German poet, 1767-1845, was a Shaksperian translator and critic.

[29] Possibly William Benjamin Carpenter, 1813-1885, a noted English physiologist.

[30] What follows is part of the Professor's paper on *Old Age,* the first of which is omitted.

[31] The lower lip already drooping.

Secondly. I have opened my eyes to a good many neglected privileges and pleasures within my reach, and requiring only a little courage to enjoy them. You may well suppose it pleased me to find that old Cato was thinking of learning to play the fiddle, when I had deliberately taken it up in my old age,[32] and satisfied myself that I could get much comfort, if not much music, out of it.

Thirdly. I have found that some of those active exercises, which are commonly thought to belong to young folks only, may be enjoyed at a much later period.

A young friend has lately written an admirable article in one of the journals, entitled, *Saints and their Bodies*.[33] Approving of his general doctrines, and grateful for his records of personal experience, I cannot refuse to add my own experimental confirmation of his eulogy of one particular form of active exercise and amusement, namely, *boating*. For the past nine years, I have rowed about, during a good part of the summer, on fresh or salt water. My present fleet on the river Charles consists of three row-boats. 1. A small flat-bottomed skiff of the shape of a flat-iron, kept mainly to lend to boys. 2. A fancy "dory" for two pairs of sculls, in which I sometimes go out with my young folks. 3. My own particular water-sulky, a "skeleton" or "shell" race-boat, twenty-two feet long, with huge outriggers, which boat I pull with ten-foot sculls,—alone, of course, as it holds but one, and tips him out, if he doesn't mind what he is about. In this I glide around the Back Bay, down the stream, up the Charles to Cambridge and Watertown, up the Mystic, round the wharves, in the wake of steamboats, which leave a swell after them delightful to rock upon; I linger under the bridges, —those "caterpillar bridges" as my brother professor so happily called them; rub against the black sides of old wood-schooners; cool down under the overhanging stern of some tall Indiaman; stretch across to the Navy-Yard, where the sentinel warns me off from the *Ohio*,—just as if I should hurt her by lying in her shadow; then strike out into the harbor, where the water gets clear and the air smells of the ocean,—till all at once I remember, that, if a west wind blows up of a sudden, I shall drift along past the islands, out of sight of the dear old State-house,—plate, tumbler, knife and fork all waiting at home, but no chair drawn up at the table,—all the dear people waiting, waiting, waiting, while the boat is sliding, sliding, sliding into the great desert, where there is no tree and no fountain. As I don't want my wreck to be washed up on one of the beaches in company with devil's-aprons, bladder-weeds, dead horse-shoes, and bleached crab-shells, I turn about and flap my long, narrow wings for home. When the tide is running out swiftly, I have a splendid fight to get through the bridges, but always make it a rule to beat,—though I have been jammed up into pretty tight places at times, and was caught once between a vessel swinging round and the pier, until our bones (the boat's that is) cracked as if we had been in the jaws of Behemoth. Then back to my moorings at the foot of the Common, off with the rowing-dress, dash under the green translucent wave, return to the garb of civilization, walk through my Garden, take a look at my elms on the Common, and, reaching my habitat, in consideration of my advanced period of life, indulge in the Elysian abandonment of a huge recumbent chair.

When I have established a pair of well-pronounced feathering-calluses on my thumbs, when I am in training so that I can do my fifteen miles at a stretch without coming to grief in any way, when I can perform my mile in eight minutes or a little less, then I feel as if I had old Time's head in chancery, and could give it to him at my leisure.

I do not deny the attraction of walking. I have bored this ancient city through and through in my daily travels, until I know it as an old inhabitant of a Cheshire knows his cheese. Why, it was I who, in the course of these rambles, discovered that remarkable avenue called *Myrtle Street*, stretching in one long line from east of the Reservoir to a precipitous and rudely paved cliff which looks down on the grim abode of Science,[34] and beyond it to the far hills; a promenade so delicious in its repose, so cheerfully varied with glimpses down the northern slope into busy Cambridge Street with its iron river of the horse-railroad, and wheeled barges gliding back and forward over it,—so delightfully closing at its western extremity in sunny courts and passages where I know peace, and beauty, and virtue, and serene old age must be perpetual tenants,—so alluring to all who desire to take their daily stroll, in the words of Dr. Watts,—

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[32] Cicero in *De Senectute* (8) represents Cato as saying, "When I heard what Socrates had done about the lyre, I should have liked for my part to have done that too." Holmes was at this time forty-nine.

[33] Col. Thomas Wentworth Higginson in the *Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1858.

[34] At the extremity of Myrtle St., which runs west from back of the State House, stood the Harvard Medical School of Holmes's day.

> Alike unknowing and unknown—

that nothing but a sense of duty would have prompted me to reveal the secret of its existence. I concede, therefore, that walking is an immeasurably fine invention, of which old age ought constantly to avail itself.

Saddle-leather is in some respects even preferable to sole-leather. The principal objection to it is of a financial character. But you may be sure that Bacon and Sydenham[35] did not recommend it for nothing. One's *hepar,* or in vulgar language, liver,—a ponderous organ, weighing some three or four pounds,—goes up and down like the dasher of a churn in the midst of the other vital arrangements, at every step of a trotting horse. The brains also are shaken up like coppers in a money-box. Riding is good, for those that are born with a silver-mounted bridle in their hand, and can ride as much and as often as they like, without thinking all the time they hear that steady grinding sound as the horse's jaws triturate with calm lateral movement the bank-bills and promises to pay upon which it is notorious that the profligate animal in question feeds day and night.

Instead, however, of considering these kinds of exercise in this empirical way, I will devote a brief space to an examination of them in a more scientific form.

The pleasure of exercise is due first to a purely physical impression, and secondly to a sense of power in action. The first source of pleasure varies of course with our condition and the state of the surrounding circumstances; the second with the amount and kind of power, and the extent and kind of action. In all forms of active exercise there are three powers simultaneously in action,—the will, the muscles, and the intellect. Each of these predominates in different kinds of exercise. In walking, the will and muscles are so accustomed to work together and perform their task with so little expenditure of force, that the intellect is left comparatively free. The mental pleasure in walking, as such, is in the sense of power over all our moving machinery. But in riding, I have the additional pleasure of governing another will, and my muscles extend to the tips of the animal's ears and to his four hoofs, instead of stopping at my hands and feet. Now in this extension of my volition and my physical frame into another animal, my tyrannical instincts and my desire for heroic strength are at once gratified. When the horse ceases to have a will of his own and his muscles require no special attention on your part, then you may live on horseback as Wesley did,[36] and write sermons or take naps, as you like. But you will observe, that, in riding on horseback, you always have a feeling, that, after all, it is not you that do the work, but the animal, and this prevents the satisfaction from being complete.

Now let us look at the conditions of rowing. I won't suppose you to be disgracing yourself in one of those miserable tubs, tugging in which is to rowing the true boat what riding a cow is to bestriding an Arab. You know the Esquimaux *kayak,* (if that is the name of it), don't you? Look at that model of one over my door. Sharp, rather?—On the contrary, it is a lubber to the one you and I must have; a Dutch fishwife to Psyche,[37] contrasted with what I will tell you about. Our boat, then, is something of the shape of a pickerel, as you look down upon his back, he lying in the sunshine just where the sharp edge of the water cuts in among the lily-pads. It is a kind of giant *pod,* as one may say,—tight everywhere, except in a little place in the middle, where you sit. Its length is from seven to ten yards, and as it is only from sixteen to thirty inches wide in its widest part, you understand why you want those "outriggers," or projecting iron frames with the rowlocks in which the oars play. My rowlocks are five feet apart; double the greatest width of the boat.

Here you are, then, afloat with a body a rod and a half long, with arms, or wings, as you may choose to call them, stretching more than twenty feet from tip to tip; every volition of yours extending as perfectly into them as if your spinal cord ran down the center strip of your boat, and the nerves of your arms tingled as far as the broad blades of your oars,—oars of spruce, balanced, leathered, and ringed under your own special direction. This, in sober earnest, is the nearest approach to flying that man has ever made or perhaps ever will make. As the hawk sails without flapping his pinions, so you drift with the tide when you will, in the most luxurious form of locomotion indulged to an embodied spirit. But if your blood wants rousing, turn round that stake in the river, which you see a mile from here; and when you come in in sixteen minutes (if you do, for we are old boys, and and not champion scullers, you remember), then say if you begin to feel a little warmed up or not! You can row easily and gently all day, and you can row yourself blind and black in the face in ten minutes, just as you like. It has been long agreed that there is no way in which a man can accomplish so much labor with his muscles as in rowing. It is in the boat, then, that man finds the largest extension of his volitional and muscular existence; and yet he may tax both of them so slightly, in that most delicious of exercises, that he shall mentally write his sermon, or his poem, or recall the remarks he has made in company and put them in form for the public, as well as in his easy-chair.

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[35] See Bacon *Of Studies.* Sydenham, an English physician, 1624-1689, and writer on medicine, was called the English Hippocrates.

[36] During his work as itinerant preacher.

[37] The personification of the soul.

I dare not publicly name the rare joys, the infinite delights, that intoxicate me on some sweet June morning, when the river and bay are smooth as a sheet of beryl-green silk, and I run along ripping it up with my knife-edged shell of a boat, the rent closing after me like those wounds of angels which Milton tells of,[38] but the seam still shining for many a long rood behind me. To lie still over the Flats, where the waters are shallow, and see the crabs crawling and the sculpins gliding busily and silently beneath the boat,—to rustle in through the long harsh grass that leads up some tranquil creek,—to take shelter from the sunbeams under one of the thousand-footed bridges, and look down its interminable colonnades, crusted with green and oozy growths, studded with minute barnacles, and belted with rings of dark muscles, while overhead streams and thunders that other river whose every wave is a human soul flowing to eternity as the river below flows to the ocean,—lying there moored unseen, in loneliness so profound that the columns of Tadmor in the Desert[39] could not seem more remote from life,—the cool breeze on one's forehead, the stream whispering against the half-sunken pillars,—why should I tell of these things, that I should live to see my beloved haunts invaded and the waves blackened with boats as with a swarm of water-beetles? What a city of idiots we must be not to have covered this glorious bay with gondolas and wherries, as we have just learned to cover the ice in winter with skaters!

I am satisfied that such a set of black-coated, stiff-jointed, soft-muscled, paste-complexioned youth as we can boast in our Atlantic cities never before sprang from loins of Anglo-Saxon lineage. Of the females that are the mates of these males I do not here speak. I preached my sermon from the lay-pulpit on this matter a good while ago. Of course, if you heard it, you know my belief is that the total climatic influences here are getting up a number of new patterns of humanity, some of which are not an improvement on the old model. Clipper-built, sharp in the bows, long in the spars, slender to look at, and fast to go, the ship, which is the great organ of our national life of relation, is but a reproduction of the typical form which the elements impress upon its builder. All this we cannot help; but we can make the best of these influences, such as they are. We have a few good boatmen,—no good horsemen that I hear of,—I cannot speak for cricketing,—but as for any great athletic feat performed by a gentleman in these latitudes, society would drop a man who should run round the Common in five minutes. Some of our amateur fencers, single-stick players, and boxers, we have no reason to be ashamed of. Boxing is rough play, but not too rough for a hearty young fellow. Anything is better than this white-blooded degeneration to which we all tend.

I dropped into a gentlemen's sparring exhibition only last evening. It did my heart good to see that there were a few young and youngish youths left who could take care of their own heads in case of emergency. It is a fine sight, that of a gentleman resolving himself into the primitive constituents of his humanity. Here is a delicate young man now, with an intellectual countenance, a slight figure, a sub-pallid complexion, a most unassuming deportment, a mild adolescent in fact, that any Hiram or Jonathan from between the plowtails would of course expect to handle with perfect ease. Oh, he is taking off his gold-bowed spectacles! Ah, he is divesting himself of his cravat! Why, he is stripping off his coat! Well, here he is, sure enough, in a tight silk shirt, and with two things that look like batter puddings in the place of his fists. Now see that other fellow with another pair of batter puddings,—the big one with the broad shoulders; he will certainly knock the little man's head off, if he strikes him. Feinting, dodging, stopping, hitting, countering,—little man's head not off yet. You might as well try to jump upon your own shadow as to hit the little man's intellectual features. He needn't have taken off the gold-bowed spectacles at all. Quick, cautious, shifty, nimble, cool, he catches all the fierce lunges or gets out of their reach, till his turn comes, and then whack goes one of the batter puddings against the big one's ribs, and bang goes the other into the big one's face, and, staggering, shuffling, slipping, tripping, collapsing, sprawling, down goes the big one in a miscellaneous bundle.—If my young friend, whose excellent article I have referred to, could only introduce the manly art of self-defense among the clergy, I am satisfied that we should have better sermons and an infinitely less quarrelsome church-militant. A bout with the gloves would let off the ill-nature, and cure the indigestion, which, united, have embroiled their subject in a bitter controversy. We should then often hear that a point of difference between an infallible and a heretic, instead of being vehemently discussed in a series of newspaper articles, had been settled by a friendly contest in several rounds, at the close of which the parties shook hands and appeared cordially reconciled.

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[38] *Paradise Lost,* vi. 330, 331.

[39] Tadmor or Palmyra, an ancient city situated in an oasis in the desert of Syria, was famous for its temples and colonnaded streets.

But boxing you and I are too old for, I am afraid. I was for a moment tempted, by the contagion of muscular electricity last evening, to try the gloves with the Benicia Boy, who looked in as a friend to the noble art; but remembering that he had twice my weight and half my age, besides the advantage of his training, I sat still and said nothing.

There is one other delicate point I wish to speak of with reference to old age. I refer to the use of *dioptric media* which correct the diminished refracting power of the humors of the eye,—in other words, spectacles. I don't use them. All I ask is a large, fair type, a strong daylight or gas-light, and one yard of focal distance, and my eyes are as good as ever. But if *your* eyes fail, I can tell you something encouraging. There is now living in New York State an old gentleman who, perceiving his sight to fail, immediately took to exercising it on the finest print, and in this way fairly bullied Nature out of her foolish habit of taking liberties at five-and-forty, or thereabout. And now this old gentleman performs the most extraordinary feats with his pen, showing that his eyes must be a pair of microscopes. I should be afraid to say to you how much he writes in the compass of a half-dime,—whether the Psalms or the Gospels, or the Psalms *and* the Gospels, I won't be positive.

But now let me tell you this. If the time comes when you must lay down the fiddle and the bow, because your fingers are too stiff, and drop the ten-foot sculls, because your arms are too weak, and after dallying awhile with eyeglasses, come at last to the undisguised reality of spectacles,—if the time comes when that fire of life we spoke of has burned so low that where its flames reverberated there is only the somber stain of regret, and where its coals glowed, only the white ashes that cover the embers of memory,—don't let your heart grow cold, and you may carry cheerfulness and love with you into the teens of your second century, if you can last so long. As our friend, the Poet, once said, in some of those old-fashioned heroics of his which he keeps for his private reading,—

Call him not old, whose visionary brain
Holds o'er the past its undivided reign.
For him in vain the envious seasons roll
Who bears eternal summer in his soul.
If yet the minstrel's song, the poet's lay,
Spring with her birds, or children with their play,
Or maiden's smile, or heavenly dream of art
Stir the few life-drops creeping round his heart,—
Turn to the record where his years are told,—
Count his gray hairs,—they cannot make him old!

End of the Professor's paper.

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From IX

[*Aquí está encerrada el alma del licenciado Pedro Garcias.*

If I should ever make a little book out of these papers, which I hope you are not getting tired of, I suppose I ought to save the above sentence for a motto on the title-page. But I want it now, and must use it. I need not say to you that the words are Spanish, nor that they are to be found in the short Introduction to *Gil Blas,* nor that they mean, "Here lies buried the soul of the licentiate[40] Pedro Garcias."

I warned all young people off the premises when I began my notes referring to old age. I must be equally fair with old people now. They are earnestly requested to leave this paper to young persons from the age of twelve to that of fourscore years and ten, at which latter period of life I am sure that I shall have at least one youthful reader. You know well enough what I mean by youth and age;—something in the soul, which has no more to do with the color of the hair than the vein of gold in a rock has to do with the grass a thousand feet above it.

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[40] A person licensed to perform the offices of the church. For Gil Blas see note 14, p. 658.

I am growing bolder as I write. I think it requires not only youth, but genius, to read this paper. I don't mean to imply that it required any whatsoever to talk what I have here written down. It did demand a certain amount of memory, and such command of the English tongue as is given by a common school education. So much I do claim. But here I have related, at length, a string of trivialities. You must have the imagination of a poet to transfigure them. These little colored patches are stains upon the windows of a human soul; stand on the outside, they are but dull and meaningless spots of color; seen from within, they are glorified shapes with empurpled wings and sunbright aureoles.

My hand trembles when I offer you this. Many times I have come bearing flowers such as my garden grew; but now I offer you this poor, brown, homely growth, you may cast it away as worthless. And yet—and yet—it is something better than flowers; it is a *seed-capsule.* Many a gardener will cut you a bouquet of his choicest blossoms for small fee, but he does not love to let the seeds of his rarest varieties go out of his own hands.

It is by little things that we know ourselves; a soul would very probably mistake itself for another, when once disembodied, were it not for individual experiences which differ from those of others only in details seemingly trifling. All of us have been thirsty thousands of times, and felt, with Pindar, that water was the best of things.[41] I alone, as I think, of all mankind, remember one particular pailful of water, flavored with the white-pine of which the pail was made, and the brown mug out of which one Edmund, a red-faced and curly-haired boy, was averred to have bitten a fragment in his haste to drink; it being then high summer, and little full-blooded boys feeling very warm and porous in the low-"studded" school-room where Dame Prentiss, dead and gone, ruled over young children, many of whom are old ghosts now, and have known Abraham for twenty or thirty years of our mortal time.

Thirst belongs to humanity, everywhere, in all ages; but that white-pine pail and that brown mug belong to me in particular; and just so of my special relationships with other things and with my race. One could never remember himself in eternity by the mere fact of having loved or hated any more than by that of having thirsted; love and hate have no more individuality in them than single waves in the ocean;—but the accidents or trivial marks which distinguished those whom we loved or hated make their memory our own forever, and with it that of our own personality also.

Therefore, my aged friend of five-and-twenty, or thereabouts, pause at the threshold of this particular record, and ask yourself seriously whether you are fit to read such revelations as are to follow. For observe, you have here no splendid array of petals such as poets offer you,—nothing but a dry shell, containing, if you will get out what is in it, a few small seeds of poems. You may laugh at them, if you like. I shall never tell you what I think of you for so doing. But if you can read into the heart of these things, in the light of other memories as slight, yet as dear to your soul, then you are neither more nor less than a POET, and can afford to write no more verses during the rest of your natural life,—which abstinence I take to be one of the surest marks of your meriting the divine name I have just bestowed upon you.

May I beg of you who have begun this paper, nobly trusting to your own imagination and sensibilities to give it the significance which it does not lay claim to without your kind assistance,—may I beg of you, I say, to pay particular attention to the *brackets* which enclose certain paragraphs? I want my "asides," you see, to whisper loud to you who read my notes, and sometimes I talk a page or two to you without pretending that I said a word of it to our boarders. You will find a very long "aside" to you almost as soon as you begin to read. And so, dear young friend, fall to at once, taking such things as I have provided for you; and if you turn them, by the aid of your powerful imagination, into a fair banquet, why, then, peace be with you, and a summer by the still waters of some quiet river, or by some yellow beach, where, as my friend, the Professor, says, you can sit with Nature's wrist in your hand and count her ocean-pulses.]

I should like to make a few intimate revelations relating especially to my early life, if I thought you would like to hear them.

[The schoolmistress turned a little in her chair, and sat with her face directed partly towards me.—Half-mourning now;—purple ribbon. That breastpin she wears has *gray* hair in it; her mother's no doubt;—I remember our landlady's daughter telling me, soon after the schoolmistress came to board with us, that she had lately "buried a payrent." That's what made her look so pale,—kept the poor dying thing alive with her own blood. Ah! long illness is the real vampyrism; think of living a year or two after one is dead, by sucking the life-blood out of a frail young creature at one's bedside! Well, souls grow white, as well as cheeks, in these holy duties; one that goes in a nurse may come out an angel.—God bless all good women!—to their soft hands and pitying hearts we must all come at last!——The schoolmistress has a better color than when she came.—Too late!—"It might have been." —Amen!—How many thoughts go to a dozen heartbeats, sometimes! There was no long pause after my remark addressed to the company, but in that time I had the train of ideas and feelings I have just given flash through my consciousness sudden and sharp as the crooked red streak that springs out of its black sheath like the creese of a Malay in his death-race, and stabs the earth right and left in its blind rage.

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[41] "Best of all things is water." *Olympian Odes,* i. 1.

I don't deny that there was a pang in it,—yes, a stab; but there was a prayer, too,—the "Amen" belonged to that.—Also, a vision of a four-story brick house, nicely furnished,—I actually saw many specific articles—curtains, sofas, tables, and others, and could draw the patterns of them at this moment,—a brick house, I say, looking out on the water, with a fair parlor, and books and busts and pots of flowers and bird-cages, all complete; and at the window, looking on the water, two of us.—"Male and female created He them."—These two were standing at the window, when a smaller shape that was playing near them looked up at me with such a look that I——poured out a glass of water, drank it all down, and then continued.]

I said I should like to tell you some things, such as people commonly never tell, about my early recollections. Should you like to hear them?

Should we *like* to hear them?—said the schoolmistress;—no, but we should *love* to.

[The voice was a sweet one, naturally, and had something very pleasant in its tone, just then.—The four-story brick house, which had gone out like a transparency when the light behind it is quenched, glimmered again for a moment; parlor, books, busts, flower-pots, bird-cages, all complete,—and the figures as before.]

We are waiting with eagerness, sir,—said the divinity-student.

[The transparency went out as if a flash of black lightning had struck it.]

If you want to hear my confessions, the next thing—I said—is to know whether I can trust you with them. It is only fair to say that there are a great many people in the world that laugh at such things. *I* think they are fools, but perhaps you don't all agree with me.

Here are children of tender age talked to as if they were capable of understanding Calvin's *Institutes*,[42] and nobody has honesty or sense enough to tell the plain truth about the little wretches: that they are as superstitious as naked savages, and such miserable spiritual cowards—that is, if they have any imagination—that they will believe anything which is taught them, and a great deal more which they teach themselves.

I was born and bred, as I have told you twenty times, among books and those who knew what was in books. I was carefully instructed in things temporal and spiritual. But up to a considerable maturity of childhood I believed Raphael and Michael Angelo[43] to have been superhuman beings. The central doctrine of the prevalent religious faith of Christendom was utterly confused and neutralized in my mind for years by one of those too common stories of actual life, which I overheard repeated in a whisper.—Why did I not ask? you will say.—You don't remember the rosy pudency of sensitive children. The first instinctive movement of the little creatures is to make a *cache,* and bury in it beliefs, doubts, dreams, hopes, and terrors. I am uncovering one of these *caches.* Do you think I was necessarily a greater fool and coward than another?

I was afraid of ships. Why, I could never tell. The masts looked frightfully tall,—but they were not so tall as the steeple of our old yellow meeting-house. At any rate, I used to hide my eyes from the sloops and schooners that were wont to lie at the end of the bridge, and I confess that traces of this undefined terror lasted very long.—One other source of alarm had a still more fearful significance. There was a great wooden HAND,—a glove-maker's sign, which used to swing and creak in the blast, as it hung from a pillar before a certain shop a mile or two outside of the city. Oh, the dreadful hand! Always hanging there ready to catch up a little boy, who would come home to supper no more, nor yet to bed,—whose porringer would be laid away empty thenceforth, and his half-worn shoes wait until his small brother grew to fit them.

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[42] *Institutes* [foundations] *of the Christian Religion*, by John Calvin, Basel, 1536.

[43] The most famous Italian painter and sculptor respectively.

As for all manner of superstitious observances, I used once to think I must have been peculiar in having such a list of them, but I now believe that half the children of the same age go through the same experiences. No Roman soothsayer ever had such a catalogue of *omens* as I found in the Sibylline leaves[44] of my childhood. That trick of throwing a stone at a tree and attaching some mighty issue to hitting or missing, which you will find mentioned in one or more biographies, I well remember. Stepping on or over certain particular things or spots—Dr. Johnson's especial weakness—I got the habit of at a very early age.—I won't swear that I have not some tendency to these not wise practices even at this present date. [How many of you that read these notes can say the same thing!]

With these follies mingled sweet delusions, which I loved so well I would not outgrow them, even when it required a voluntary effort to put a momentary trust in them. Here is one which I cannot help telling you.

The firing of the great guns at the Navy-Yard is easily heard at the place where I was born and lived. "There is a ship of war come in," they used to say, when they heard them. Of course, I supposed that such vessels came in unexpectedly, after indefinite years of absence,—suddenly as falling stones; and that the great guns roared in their astonishment and delight at the sight of the old war-ship splitting the bay with her cutwater. Now, the sloop-of-war the *Wasp*,[45] Captain Blakely, after gloriously capturing the *Reindeer* and the *Avon*, had disappeared from the face of the ocean, and was supposed to be lost. But there was no proof of it, and, of course, for a time, hopes were entertained that she might be heard from. Long after the last real chance had utterly vanished, I pleased myself with the fond illusion that somewhere on the waste of waters she was still floating, and there were *years* during which I never heard the sound of the great gun booming inland from the Navy-Yard without saying to myself, "The *Wasp* has come!" and almost thinking I could see her, as she rolled in, crumpling the water before her, weather-beaten, barnacled, with shattered spars and threadbare canvas, welcomed by the shouts and tears of thousands. This was one of those dreams that I nursed and never told. Let me make a clean breast of it now, and say, that, so late as to have outgrown childhood, perhaps to have got far on towards manhood, when the roar of the cannon has struck suddenly on my ear, I have started with a thrill of vague expectation and tremulous delight, and the long-unspoken words have articulated themselves in the mind's dumb whisper, *The Wasp has come!*

——Yes, children believe plenty of queer things. I suppose all of you have had the pocketbook fever when you were little?—What do I mean? Why, ripping up old pocketbooks in the firm belief that bank-bills to an immense amount were hidden in them. —So, too, you must all remember some splendid unfulfilled promise of somebody or other, which fed you with hopes perhaps for years, and which left a blank in your life which nothing has ever filled up.—O. T.[46] quitted our household carrying with him the passionate regrets of the more youthful members. He was an ingenious youngster; wrote wonderful copies, and carved the two initials given above with great skill on all available surfaces. I thought, by the way, they were all gone; but the other day I found them on a certain door which I will show you some time. How it surprised me to find them so near the ground! I had thought the boy of no trivial dimensions. Well, O. T., when he went, made a solemn promise to two of us. I was to have a ship, and the other a mar*tin*-house (last syllable pronounced as in the word *tin*). Neither ever came; but, oh, how many and many a time I have stolen to the corner,—the cars pass close by it at this time,—and looked up that long avenue, thinking that he must be coming now, almost sure, as I turned to look northward, that there he would be, trudging towards me, the ship in one hand and the mar*tin*-house in the other!

[You must not suppose that all I am going to say, as well as all I have said, was told to the whole company. The young fellow whom they call John was in the yard, sitting on a barrel and smoking a cheroot, the fumes of which came in, not ungrateful, through the open window. The divinity-student disappeared in the midst of our talk. The poor relation in black bombazine, who looked and moved as if all her articulations were elbow-joints, had gone off to her chamber, after waiting with a look of soul-subduing decorum at the foot of the stairs until one of the male sort had passed her and ascended into the upper regions. This is a famous point of etiquette in our boarding-house; in fact, between ourselves, they make such an awful fuss about it, that I, for one, had a great deal rather have them simple enough not to think of such matters at all. Our landlady's daughter said, the other evening, that she was going to "retire"; whereupon the young fellow called John took up a lamp and insisted on lighting her to the foot of the staircase. Nothing would induce her to pass by him, until the schoolmistress, saying in good plain English that it was her bedtime, walked straight by them both, not seeming to trouble herself about either of them.

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[44] The sibyls were said to have written their prophecies and omens on separate leaves. Once the order was lost the meaning could scarcely be unraveled, though none the less momentous. See *Æneid*, iii. 444 ; vi. 74.

[45] An American warship, built in 1814, which overcame the *Reindeer* June 28, and the *Avon* Sept. 1, then hailed another vessel Oct. 9, but was never heard from again.

[46] **Possibly some youthful chore-boy.**

I have been led away from what I meant the portion included in these brackets to inform my readers about. I say, then, most of the boarders had left the table about the time when I began telling some of these secrets of mine,—all of them, in fact, but the old gentleman opposite and the schoolmistress. I understand why a young woman should like to hear these simple but genuine experiences of early life, which are, as I have said, the little brown seeds of what may yet grow to be poems with leaves of azure and gold; but when the old gentleman pushed up his chair nearer to me, and slanted round his best ear, and once, when I was speaking of some trifling, tender reminiscence, drew a long breath, with such a tremor in it that a little more and it would have been a sob, why, then I felt there must be something of nature in them which redeemed their seeming insignificance. Tell me, man or woman with whom I am whispering, have you not a small store of recollections, such as these I am uncovering, buried beneath the dead leaves of many summers, perhaps under the unmelting snows of fast-returning winters,—a few such recollections, which, if you should write them all out, would be swept into some careless editor's drawer, and might cost a scanty half-hour's lazy reading to his subscribers,—and yet, if Death should cheat you out of them, you would not know yourself in eternity?]

——I made three acquaintances at a very early period of life, my introduction to whom was never forgotten. The first unequivocal act of wrong that has left its trace in my memory was this: refusing a small favor asked of me,—nothing more than telling what had happened at school one morning. No matter who asked it; but there were circumstances which saddened and awed me. I had no heart to speak;—I faltered some miserable, perhaps petulant excuse, stole away, and the first battle of life was lost. What remorse followed I need not tell. Then and there, to the best of my knowledge, I first consciously took Sin by the hand and turned my back on Duty. Time has led me to look upon my offense more leniently; I do not believe it or any other childish wrong is infinite, as some have pretended, but infinitely finite. Yet, oh, if I had but won that battle!

The great Destroyer, whose awful shadow it was that had silenced me, came near me,—but never, so as to be distinctly seen and remembered, during my tender years. There flits dimly before me the image of a little girl, whose name even I have forgotten, a schoolmate, whom we missed one day, and were told that she had died. But what death was I never had any very distinct idea, until one day I climbed the low stone wall of the old burial-ground and mingled with a group that were looking into a very deep, long, narrow hole, dug down through the green sod, down through the brown loam, down through the yellow gravel, and there at the bottom was an oblong red box, and a still, sharp, white face of a young man seen through an opening at one end of it. When the lid was closed, and the gravel and stones rattled down pell-mell, and the woman in black, who was crying and wringing her hands, went off with the other mourners, and left him, then I felt that I had seen Death, and should never forget him.

One other acquaintance I made at an earlier period of life than the habit of romancers authorizes.—Love, of course.—She was a famous beauty afterwards.—I am satisfied that many children rehearse their parts in the drama of life before they have shed all their milk-teeth.—I think I won't tell the story of the golden blonde.—I suppose everybody has had his childish fancies; but sometimes they are passionate impulses, which anticipate all the tremulous emotions belonging to a later period. Most children remember seeing and adoring an angel before they were a dozen years old.

[The old gentleman had left his chair opposite and taken a seat by the schoolmistress and myself, a little way from the table.—It's true, it's true,—said the old gentleman.—He took hold of a steel watch-chain, which carried a large, square gold key at one end and was supposed to have some kind of timekeeper at the other. With some trouble he dragged up an ancient-looking, thick, silver, bull's-eye watch. He looked at it for a moment,—hesitated,—touched the inner corner of his right eye with the pulp of his middle finger,—looked at the face of the watch,—said it was getting into the forenoon,—then opened the watch and handed me the loose outside case without a word.—The watch-paper had been pink once, and had a faint tinge still, as if all its tender life had not yet quite faded out. Two little birds, a flower, and, in small school-girl letters, a date,—17 . . —no matter.—Before I was thirteen years old,—said the old gentleman.—I don't know what was in that young schoolmistress's head, nor why she should have done it; but she took out the watch-paper and put it softly to her lips, as if she were kissing the poor thing that made it so long ago. The old gentleman took the watch-paper carefully from her, replaced it, turned away and walked out, holding the watch in his hand. I saw him pass the window a moment after with that foolish white hat on his head; he couldn't have been thinking of what he was about when he put it on. So the schoolmistress and I were left alone. I drew my chair a shade nearer to her, and continued.]

And since I am talking of early recollections, I don't know why I shouldn't mention some others that still cling to me,—not that you will attach any very particular meaning to these same images so full of significance to me, but that you will find something parallel to them in your own memory. You remember, perhaps, what I said one day about smells. There were certain *sounds* also which had a mysterious suggestiveness to me,—not so intense, perhaps, as that connected with the other sense, but yet peculiar, and never to be forgotten.

The first was the creaking of the wood-sleds, bringing their loads of oak and walnut from the country, as the slow-swinging oxen trailed them along over the complaining snow, in the cold, brown light of early morning. Lying in bed and listening to their dreary music had a pleasure in it akin to the Lucretian luxury,[47] or that which Byron speaks of as to be enjoyed in looking on at a battle by one "who hath no friend, no brother there."[48]

There was another sound, in itself so sweet, and so connected with one of those simple and curious superstitions of childhood of which I have spoken, that I can never cease to cherish a sad sort of love for it. Let me tell the superstitious fancy first. The Puritan "Sabbath," as everybody knows, began at "sundown" on Saturday evening. To such observance of it I was born and bred. As the large, round disk of day declined, a stillness, a solemnity, a somewhat melancholy hush came over us all. It was time for work to cease, and for playthings to be put away. The world of active life passed into the shadow of an eclipse, not to emerge until the sun should sink again beneath the horizon.

It was in this stillness of the world without and of the soul within that the pulsating lullaby of the evening crickets used to make itself most distinctly heard,—so that I well remember I used to think that the purring of these little creatures, which mingled with the batrachian hymns[49] from the neighboring swamp, *was peculiar to Saturday evenings*. I don't know that anything could give a clearer idea of the quieting and subduing effect of the old habit of observance of what was considered holy time, than this strange, childish fancy.

Yes, and there was still another sound which mingled its solemn cadences with the waking and sleeping dreams of my boyhood. It was heard only at times,—a deep, muffled roar, which rose and fell, not loud, but vast,—a whistling boy would have drowned it for his next neighbor, but it must have been heard over the space of a hundred square miles. I used to wonder what this might be. Could it be the roar of the thousand wheels and the ten thousand footsteps jarring and trampling along the stones of the neighboring city? That would be continuous; but this, as I have said, rose and fell in regular rhythm. I remember being told, and I suppose this to have been the true solution, that it was the sound of the waves, after a high wind, breaking on the long beaches many miles distant. I should really like to know whether any observing people living ten miles, more or less, inland from long beaches,—in such a town, for instance, as Cantabridge, in the eastern part of the Territory of the Massachusetts,—have ever observed any such sound, and whether it was rightly accounted for as above.

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[47] Later editions of the *Autocrat* read: "Akin to that which Lucretius describes in witnessing a ship toiling through the waves while we sit at ease on shore." Cf. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, Bk. II. l. 1.

[48] *Childe Harold* i. 40.

[49] frog choruses

Mingling with these inarticulate sounds in the low murmur of memory, are the echoes of certain voices I have heard at rare intervals. I grieve to say it, but our people, I think, have not generally agreeable voices. The marrowy organisms, with skins that shed water like the backs of ducks, with smooth surfaces neatly padded beneath, and velvet linings to their singing-pipes, are not so common among us as that other pattern of humanity with angular outlines and plane surfaces, arid integuments, hair like the fibrous covering of a cocoa-nut in gloss and suppleness as well as color, and voices at once thin and strenuous;—acidulous enough to produce effervescence with alkalis, and stridulous enough to sing duets with the katydids. I think our conversational soprano, as sometimes overheard in the cars, arising from a group of young persons, who may have taken the train at one of our great industrial centers, for instance,—young persons of the female sex, we will say, who have bustled in, full-dressed, engaged in loud strident speech, and who, after free discussion, have fixed on two or more double seats, which having secured, they proceed to eat apples and hand round daguerreotypes,—I say, I think the conversational soprano, heard under these circumstances, would not be among the allurements the old Enemy would put in requisition, were he getting up a new temptation of St. Anthony.[50]

There are sweet voices among us, we all know, and voices not musical, it may be, to those who hear them for the first time, yet sweeter to us than any we shall hear until we listen to some warbling angel in the overture to that eternity of blissful harmonies we hope to enjoy. But why should I tell lies? If my friends love me, it is because I try to tell the truth. I never heard but two voices in my life that frightened me by their sweetness.

——Frightened you?—said the schoolmistress.—Yes, frightened me. They made me feel as if there might be constituted a creature with such a chord in her voice to some string in another's soul, that, if she but spoke, he would leave all and follow her, though it were into the jaws of Erebus.[51] Our only chance to keep our wits is, that there are so few natural chords between others' voices and this string in our souls, and that those which at first may have jarred a little, by-and-by come into harmony with it.—But I tell you this is no fiction. You may call the story of Ulysses and the Sirens a fable, but what will you say to Mario and the poor lady who followed him?[52]

——Whose were those two voices that bewitched me so?—They both belonged to German women. One was a chambermaid, not otherwise fascinating. The key of my room at a certain great hotel was missing, and this Teutonic maiden was summoned to give information respecting it. The simple soul was evidently not long from her motherland, and spoke with sweet uncertainty of dialect. But to hear her wonder and lament and suggest, with soft, liquid inflections, and low, sad murmurs, in tones as full of serious tenderness for the fate of the lost key as if it had been a child that had strayed from its mother, was so winning, that, had her features and figure been as delicious as her accents,—if she had looked like the marble Clytie,[53] for instance,—why, all I can say is——

[The schoolmistress opened her eyes so wide, that I stopped short.]

I was only going to say that I should have drowned myself. For Lake Erie was close by and it is so much better to accept asphyxia, which takes only three minutes by the watch, than a *mésalliance,* that lasts fifty years to begin with, and then passes along down the line of descent, (breaking out in all manner of boorish manifestations of feature and manner, which, if men were only as short-lived as horses, could be readily traced back through the square-roots and the cube-roots of the family stem on which you have hung the armorial bearings of the De Champignons or the De la Morues,[54] until one came to beings that ate with knives and said "Haow?"), that no person of right feeling could have hesitated for a single moment.

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[50] Anthony the Great 251-356, an ascetic, was often sorely tempted by the devil who, he said, appeared to him in the shape of beautiful women.

[51] hell

[52] The sirens by their sweet music tempted sailors to turn aside from their course only to be dashed upon treacherous rocks. Mario, 1810-1883, was an Italian opera singer. A lady, whose name is not given and who never spoke to him nor sought to win his favor, was, throughout thirty years, present at all but three performances of his.

[53] A nymph beloved by Apollo. A Clytie in marble was a frequent New England parlor decoration in Holmes's day.

[54] The De Mushrooms and the De la Codfish: the newly rich.

The second of the ravishing voices I have heard, was, as I have said, that of another German woman.—I suppose I shall ruin myself by saying that such a voice could not have come from any Americanized human being.

——What was there in it?—said the schoolmistress,—and, upon my word, her tones were so very musical, that I almost wished I had said three voices instead of two, and not made the unpatriotic remark above reported.—Oh, I said, it had so much *woman* in it,—*muliebrity*,[55] as well as *femineity*;—no self-assertion, such as free suffrage introduces into every word and movement; large, vigorous nature, running back to those huge-limbed Germans of Tacitus,[56] but subdued by the reverential training and tuned by the kindly culture of fifty generations. Sharp business habits, a lean soil, independence, enterprise, and east winds, are not the best things for the larynx. Still, you hear noble voices among us,—I have known families famous for them,—but ask the first person you meet a question, and ten to one there is a hard, sharp, metallic, matter-of-business clink in the accents of the answer, that produces the effect of one of those bells which small trades-people connect with their shop-doors, and which spring upon your ear with such vivacity, as you enter, that your first impulse is to retire at once from the precincts.

——Ah, but I must not forget that dear little child I saw and heard in a French hospital. Between two and three years old. Fell out of her chair and snapped both thigh-bones. Lying in bed, patient, gentle. Rough students round her, some in white aprons, looking fearfully business-like; but the child placid, perfectly still. I spoke to her, and the blessed little creature answered me in a voice of such heavenly sweetness, with that reedy thrill in it which you have heard in the thrush's even-song, that I hear it at this moment, while I am writing, so many, many years afterwards.—*C'est tout comme un serin*[57] said the French student at my side.

These are the voices which struck the key-note of my conceptions as to what the sounds we are to hear in heaven will be, if we shall enter through one of the twelve gates of pearl. There must be other things besides aërolites that wander from their own spheres to ours; and when we speak of celestial sweetness or beauty, we may be nearer the literal truth than we dream. If mankind generally are the shipwrecked survivors of some pre-Adamitic cataclysm, set adrift in these little open boats of humanity to make one more trial to reach the shore,—as some grave theologians have maintained,—if, in plain English, men are the ghosts of dead devils who have "died into life," (to borrow an expression from Keats), and walk the earth in a suit of living rags which lasts three or four score summers,—why, there must have been a few good spirits sent to keep them company, and these sweet voices I speak of must belong to them.

——I wish you could once hear my sister's voice,—said the schoolmistress.

If it is like yours, it must be a pleasant one,—said I.

I never thought mine was anything,—said the schoolmistress.

How should you know?—said I.—People never hear their own voices,—any more than they see their own faces. There is not even a looking-glass for the voice. Of course, there is something audible to us when we speak; but that something is not our own voice as it is known to all our acquaintances. I think, if an image spoke to us in our own tones, we should not know them in the least.—How pleasant it would be, if in another state of being we could have shapes like our former selves for playthings,—we standing outside or inside of them, as we liked, and they being to us just what we used to be to others!

——I wonder if there will be nothing like what we call "play," after our earthly toys are broken,—said the schoolmistress.

Hush,—said I,—what will the divinity-student say?

[I thought she was hit, that time;—but the shot must have gone over her, or on one side of her; she did not flinch.]

Oh,—said the schoolmistress,—he must look out for my sister's heresies; I am afraid he will be too busy with them to take care of mine.

Do you mean to say,—said I,—that it is *your sister* whom that student——

[The young fellow commonly known as John, who had been sitting on the barrel, smoking, jumped off just then, kicked over the barrel, gave it a push with his foot that set it rolling, and stuck his saucy-looking face in at the window so as to cut my question off in the middle; and the schoolmistress leaving the room a few minutes afterwards, I did not have a chance to finish it.

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[55] *mulier* is Latin for woman

[56] Roman historian, 55-117, author of *De Germania*, the first systematic description of the Germans.

[57] "It is quite like a canary."

The young fellow came in and sat down in a chair, putting his heels on the top of another.

Pooty girl,—said he.

A fine young lady,—I replied.

Keeps a fust-rate school, according to accounts,—said he,—teaches all sorts of things,—Latin and Italian and music. Folks rich once,—smashed up. She went right ahead as smart as if she'd been born to work. That's the kind o' girl I go for. I'd marry her, only two or three other girls would drown themselves, if I did.

I think the above is the longest speech of this young fellow's which I have put on record. I do not like to change his peculiar expressions, for this is one of those cases in which the style is the man, as M. de Buffon[58] says. The fact is, the young fellow is a good-hearted creature enough, only too fond of his jokes,—and if it were not for those heat-lightning winks on one side of his face, I should not mind his fun much.]

. . . .

From XI

. . . .

——Should you like to hear what moderate wishes life brings one to at last? I used to be very ambitious,—wasteful, extravagant, and luxurious in all my fancies. Read too much in the *Arabian Nights.* Must have the lamp,—couldn't do without the ring. Exercise every morning on the brazen horse. Plump down into castles as full of little milk-white princesses as a nest is of young sparrows. All love me dearly at once. —Charming idea of life, but too high-colored for the reality. I have outgrown all this; my tastes have become exceedingly primitive,—almost, perhaps, ascetic. We carry happiness into our condition, but must not hope to find it there. I think you will be willing to hear some lines which embody the subdued and limited desires of my maturity.

CONTENTMENT

"Man wants but little here below."[59]

Little I ask; my wants are few;
I only wish a hut of stone,
(A *very plain* brown stone will do,)
That I may call my own;—
And close at hand is such a one,
In yonder street that fronts the sun.

Plain food is quite enough for me;
Three courses are as good as ten;—
If Nature can subsist on three,
Thank Heaven for three. Amen!
I always thought cold victual nice;—
My *choice* would be vanilla-ice.

I care not much for gold or land;—
Give me a mortgage here and there,—
Some good bank-stock,—some note of hand,
Or trifling railroad share;—
I only ask that Fortune send
A little more than I shall spend.

Honors are silly toys, I know,
And titles are but empty names;—
I would, *perhaps,* be Plenipo,—[60]
But only near St. James;—
I'm very sure I should not care
To fill our Gubernator's chair.

Jewels are baubles; 'tis a sin
To care for such unfruitful things;—
One good-sized diamond in a pin,—
Some, *not so large,* in rings,—
A ruby, and a pearl, or so,
Will do for me;—I laugh at show.

My dame should dress in cheap attire;
(Good, heavy silks are never dear;)
I own perhaps I *might* desire
Some shawls of true cashmere,—
Some marrowy crapes of China silk,
Like wrinkled skins on scalded milk.

I would not have the horse I drive
So fast that folks must stop and stare;
An easy gait—two, forty-five—
Suits me; I do not care;—
Perhaps, for just a *single spurt,*
Some seconds less would do no hurt.

Of pictures, I should like to own
Titians and Raphaels three or four.—
I love so much their style and tone,—
One Turner, and no more,—[61]
(A landscape,—foreground golden dirt,—
The sunshine painted with a squirt.)

Of books but few,—some fifty score
For daily use, and bound for wear;
The rest upon an upper floor;—
Some *little* luxury *there*
Of red morocco's gilded gleam,
And vellum rich as country cream.

Busts, cameos, gems,—such things as these,
Which others often show for pride,
I value, for their power to please,
And selfish churls deride;—
One Stradivarius, I confess,
Two Meerschaums, I would fain possess.

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[58] Count de Buffon, 1707-1788, a French naturalist celebrated in literature for his essay on style which contains the words quoted, "Le style est l'homme même."

[59] Goldsmith, *The Hermit,* stanza eight, but probably taken by Goldsmith from Young's *Night Thoughts,* iv. 118, "Man wants but little, nor that little long:"

[60] Minister Plenipotentiary—one of the representatives of the United States at a foreign court.

[61] The paintings of the Italian Titian (1477-1576) and Raphael (1483-1520) and of the English Turner (1775-1851) are of priceless value.

Wealth's wasteful tricks I will not learn,
Nor ape the glittering upstart fool;—
Shall not carved tables serve my turn,
But *all* must be of buhl?[62]
Give grasping pomp its double share,—
I ask but *one* recumbent chair.

Thus humble let me live and die,
Nor long for Midas' golden touch;[63]
If Heaven more generous gifts deny,
I shall not miss them *much*,—
Too grateful for the blessing lent
Of simple tastes and mind content!

MY LAST WALK WITH THE SCHOOL-MISTRESS

(*A Parenthesis*)

I can't say just how many walks she and I had taken together before this one. I found the effect of going out every morning was decidedly favorable on her health. Two pleasing dimples, the places for which were just marked when she came, played, shadowy, in her freshening cheeks when she smiled and nodded good-morning to me from the school-house-steps.

I am afraid I did the greater part of the talking. At any rate, if I should try to report all that I said during the first half-dozen walks we took together, I fear that I might receive a gentle hint from my friends the publishers, that a separate volume, at my own risk and expense, would be the proper method of bringing them before the public.

——I would have a woman as true as Death. At the first real lie which works from the heart outward, she should be tenderly chloroformed into a better world, where she can have an angel for a governess, and feed on strange fruits which will make her all over again, even to her bones and marrow.—Whether gifted with the accident of beauty or not, she should have been molded in the rose-red clay of Love, before the breath of life made a moving mortal of her. Love-capacity is a congenital endowment; and I think, after a while, one gets to know the warm-hued natures it belongs to from the pretty pipe-clay counterfeits of them.—Proud she may be, in the sense of respecting herself; but pride, in the sense of contemning others less gifted than herself, deserves the two lowest circles of a vulgar woman's Inferno, where the punishments are Smallpox and Bankruptcy.—She who nips off the end of a brittle courtesy, as one breaks the tip of an icicle, to bestow upon those whom she ought cordially and kindly to recognize, proclaims the fact that she comes not merely of low blood, but of bad blood. Consciousness of unquestioned position makes people gracious in proper measure to all; but if a woman put on airs with her real equals, she has something about herself or her family she is ashamed of, or ought to be. Middle, and more than middle-aged people, who know family histories, generally see through it. An official of standing was rude to me once. Oh, that is the maternal grandfather,—said a wise old friend to me,—he was a boor.—Better too few words, from the woman we love, than too many: while she is silent, Nature is working for her; while she talks, she is working for herself.—Love is sparingly soluble in the words of men; therefore they speak much of it; but one syllable of woman's speech can dissolve more of it than a man's heart can hold.

——Whether I said any or all of these things to the schoolmistress, or not,—whether I stole them out of Lord Bacon,—whether I cribbed them from Balzac,[64] whether I dipped them from the ocean of Tupperian wisdom,—or whether I have just found them in my head, laid there by that solemn fowl, Experience (who, according to my observation, cackles oftener than she drops real live eggs,) I cannot say. Wise men have said more foolish things,—and foolish men, I don't doubt, have said as wise things. Anyhow, the schoolmistress and I had pleasant walks and long talks, all of which I do not feel bound to report.

——You are a stranger to me, Ma'am.—I don't doubt you would like to know all I said to the schoolmistress.—I sha'n't do it;—I had rather get the publishers to return the money you have invested in this. Besides, I have forgotten a good deal of it. I shall tell only what I like of what I remember.

——My idea was, in the first place, to search out the picturesque spots which the city affords a sight of, to those who have eyes. I know a good many, and it was a pleasure to look at them in company with my young friend. There were the shrubs and flowers in the Franklin-Place front-yards or borders: Commerce is just putting his granite foot upon them. Then there are certain small seraglio-gardens, into which one can get a peep through the crevices of high fences,—one in Myrtle Street, or backing on it,—here and there one at the North and South Ends. Then the great elms in Essex Street. Then the stately horse-chestnuts in that vacant lot in Chambers Street, which hold their outspread hands over your head, (as I said in my poem the other day,) and look as if they were whispering, "May grace, mercy, and peace be with you!"—and the rest of that benediction. Nay, there are certain patches of ground, which, having lain neglected for a time, Nature, who always has her pockets full of seeds, and holes in all her pockets, has covered with hungry plebeian growths, which fight for life with each other, until some of them get broad-leaved and succulent, and you have a coarse vegetable tapestry which Raphael would not have disdained to spread over the foreground of his masterpiece. The Professor pretends that he found such a one in Charles Street, which, in its dare-devil impudence of rough-and-tumble vegetation, beat the pretty-behaved flower-beds of the Public Garden as ignominiously as a group of young tatterdemalions playing pitch-and-toss beats a row of Sunday-school-boys with their teacher at their head.

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[62] Inlaid work of tortoise shell, mother of pearl, and metal.

[63] In the Greek myth, everything King Midas touched turned to gold—even his food.

[64] The great French novelist, 1799-1850. Martin Farquhar Tupper, 1810-1889, an inferior English didactic poet, at one time was very popular.

But then the Professor has one of his burrows in that region, and puts everything in high colors relating to it. That is his way about everything——I hold any man cheap,—he said,—of whom nothing stronger can be uttered than that all his geese are swans. ——How is that, Professor?—said I;—I should have set you down for one of that sort.——Sir,—said he,—I am proud to say, that Nature has so far enriched me, that I cannot own so much as a *duck* without seeing in it as pretty a swan as ever swam the basin in the garden of the Luxembourg.[65] And the Professor showed the whites of his eyes devoutly, like one returning thanks after a dinner of many courses.

I don't know anything sweeter than this leaking in of Nature through all the cracks in the walls and floors of cities. You heap up a million tons of hewn rocks on a square mile or two of earth which was green once. The trees look down from the hill-sides and ask each other, as they stand on tiptoe,—"What are these people about?" And the small herbs at their feet look up and whisper back,—"We will go and see." So the small herbs pack themselves up in the least possible bundles, and wait until the wind steals to them at night and whispers,—"Come with me." Then they go softly with it into the great city,—one to a cleft in the pavement, one to a spout on the roof, one to a seam in the marbles over a rich gentleman's bones, and one to the grave without a stone where nothing but a man is buried,—and there they grow, looking down on the generations of men from moldy roofs, looking up from between the less-trodden pavements, looking out through iron cemetery-railings. Listen to them, when there is only a light breath stirring, and you will hear them saying to each other,—"Wait awhile!" The words run along the telegraph of those narrow green lines that border the roads leading from the city, until they reach the slope of the hills, and the trees repeat in low murmurs to each other,—"Wait awhile!" By-and-by the flow of life in the streets ebbs and the old leafy inhabitants—the smaller tribes always in front—saunter in, one by one, very careless seemingly, but very tenacious, until they swarm so that the great stones gape from each other with the crowding of their roots, and the feldspar begins to be picked out of the granite to find them food. At last the trees take up their solemn line of march, and never rest until they have encamped in the market-place. Wait long enough and you will find an old doting oak hugging a huge worn block in its yellow underground arms; that was the corner-stone of the State-House. Oh, so patient she is, this imperturbable Nature!

——Let us cry!——

But all this has nothing to do with my walks and talks with the schoolmistress. I did not say that I would not tell you something about them. Let me alone, and I shall talk to you more than I ought to, probably. We never tell our secrets to people that pump for them.

Books we talked about, and education. It was her duty to know something of these, and of course she did. Perhaps I was somewhat more learned than she, but I found that the difference between her reading and mine was like that of a man's and a woman's dusting a library. The man flaps about with a bunch of feathers; the woman goes to work softly with a cloth. She does not raise half the dust, nor fill her own eyes and mouth with it,—but she goes into all the corners and attends to the leaves as much as the covers.—Books are the *negative* pictures of thought, and the more sensitive the mind that receives their images, the more nicely the finest lines are reproduced. A woman (of the right kind), reading after a man, follows him as Ruth followed the reapers of Boaz,[66] and her gleanings are often the finest of the wheat.

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[65] The palace of the Luxembourg in Paris has beautiful formal gardens surrounding an artificial lake.

But it was in talking of Life that we came most nearly together. I thought I knew something about that,—that I could speak or write about it somewhat to the purpose.

To take up this fluid earthly being of ours as a sponge sucks up water,—to be steeped and soaked in its realities as a hide fills its pores lying seven years in a tan-pit,—to have winnowed every wave of it as a mill-wheel works up the stream that runs through the flume upon its float-boards,—to have curled up in the keenest spasms and flattened out in the laxest languors of this breathing-sickness, which keeps certain parcels of matter uneasy for three or four score years, —to have fought all the devils and clasped all the angels of its delirium,—and then, just at the point when the white-hot passions have cooled down to cherry-red, plunge our experience into the ice-cold stream of some human language or other, one might think would end in a rhapsody with something of spring and temper in it. All this I thought my power and province.

The schoolmistress had tried life, too. Once in a while one meets with a single soul greater than all the living pageant which passes before it. As the pale astronomer sits in his study with sunken eyes and thin fingers, and weighs Uranus or Neptune as in a balance, so there are meek, slight women who have weighed all which this planetary life can offer, and hold it like a bauble in the palm of their slender hands. This was one of them. Fortune had left her, sorrow had baptized her; the routine of labor and the loneliness of almost friendless city-life were before her. Yet, as I looked upon her tranquil face, gradually regaining a cheerfulness which was often sprightly, as she became interested in the various matters we talked about and places we visited, I saw that eye and lip and every shifting lineament were made for love,—unconscious of their sweet office as yet, and meeting the cold aspect of Duty with the natural graces which were meant for the reward of nothing less than the Great Passion.

——I never addressed one word of love to the schoolmistress in the course of these pleasant walks. It seemed to me that we talked of everything but love on that particular morning. There was, perhaps, a little more timidity and hesitancy on my part than I have commonly shown among our people at the boarding-house. In fact, I considered myself the master at the breakfast-table; but, somehow, I could not command myself just then so well as usual. The truth is, I had secured a passage to Liverpool in the steamer which was to leave at noon,—with the condition, however, of being released in case circumstances occurred to detain me. The schoolmistress knew nothing about all this, of course, as yet.

It was on the Common that we were walking. The *mall* or boulevard of our Common, you know, has various branches leading from it in different directions. One of these runs downward from opposite Joy Street southward across the whole length of the Common to Boylston Street. We called it the long path, and were fond of it.

I felt very weak indeed (though of a tolerably robust habit) as we came opposite the head of this path on that morning. I think I tried to speak twice without making myself distinctly audible. At last I got out the question,—Will you take the long path with me?——Certainly,—said the schoolmistress,—with much pleasure.——Think,—I said,—before you answer; if you take the long path with me now, I shall interpret it that we are to part no more!——The schoolmistress stepped back with a sudden movement, as if an arrow had struck her.

One of the long granite blocks used as seats was hard by,—the one you may still see close by the Gingko-tree.—Pray, sit down,—I said.——No, no, she answered, softly,—I will walk the *long path* with you!

——The old gentleman who sits opposite met us walking, arm in arm, about the middle of the long path, and said, very charmingly,—"Good-morning, my dears!"

1858 1858

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

Born, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1819, died there, 1891. Lowell was of intellectual ancestry, graduated from Harvard, 1838, studied law, but soon devoted himself entirely to literature. He followed Longfellow as professor of modern languages at Harvard, 1855, and was editor of the *Atlantic Monthly,* 1857-1862, and of the *North American Review,* 1863-1872. He was minister to Spain, 1877-1880, and to England, 1880-1885. His poems appeared at various dates from 1841 to 1888. His most notable prose works are *Conversations on Some Old Poets,* 1845; *Among*

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[66] *Ruth* ii. 2.

my Books, 1870, 1876; *My Study Windows,* 1871; *Democracy and Other Addresses,* 1886; *The Old English Dramatists,* 1892.

RHŒCUS [1]

God sends his teachers unto every age,
To every clime, and every race of men,
With revelations fitted to their growth
And shape of mind, nor gives the realm of Truth
Into the selfish rule of one sole race:
Therefore each form of worship that hath swayed
The life of man, and given it to grasp
The master-key of knowledge, reverence,
Enfolds some germs of goodness and of right;
Else never had the eager soul, which loathes
The slothful down of pampered ignorance,
Found in it even a moment's fitful rest.

There is an instinct in the human heart
Which makes that all the fables it hath coined,
To justify the reign of its belief
And strengthen it by beauty's right divine,
Veil in their inner cells a mystic gift,
Which, like the hazel twig, in faithful hands,
Points surely to the hidden springs of truth.
For, as in nature naught is made in vain,
But all things have within their hull of use
A wisdom and a meaning which may speak
Of spiritual secrets to the ear
Of spirit; so, in whatsoe'er the heart
Hath fashioned for a solace to itself,
To make its inspirations suit its creed,
And from the niggard hands of falsehood wring
Its needful food of truth, there ever is
A sympathy with Nature, which reveals,
Not less than her own works, pure gleams of light
And earnest parables of inward lore.
Hear now this fairy legend of old Greece,
As full of gracious youth, and beauty still
As the immortal freshness of that grace
Carved for all ages on some Attic frieze.

A youth named Rhœcus, wandering in the wood,
Saw an old oak just trembling to its fall,
And, feeling pity of so fair a tree,
He propped its gray trunk with admiring care,
And with a thoughtless footstep loitered on.
But, as he turned, he heard a voice behind
That murmured "Rhœcus!" 'T was as if the leaves,
Stirred by a passing breath, had murmured it,
And, while he paused bewildered, yet again
It murmured "Rhœcus!" softer than a breeze.
He started and beheld with dizzy eyes
What seemed the substance of a happy dream
Stand there before him, spreading a warm glow
Within the green glooms of the shadowy oak.
It seemed a woman's shape, yet far too fair
To be a woman, and with eyes too meek
For any that were wont to mate with gods.
All naked like a goddess stood she there,
And like a goddess all too beautiful
To feel the guilt-born earthliness of shame.
"Rhœcus, I am the Dryad of this tree,"
Thus she began, dropping her low-toned words
Serene, and full, and clear, as drops of dew,
"And with it I am doomed to live and die;
The rain and sunshine are my caterers,
Nor have I other bliss than simple life;
Now ask me what thou wilt, that I can give,
And with a thankful joy it shall be thine."

Then Rhœcus, with a flutter at the heart,
Yet, by the prompting of such beauty, bold,
Answered: "What is there that can satisfy
The endless craving of the soul but love?
Give me thy love, or but the hope of that
Which must be evermore my spirit's goal."
After a little pause she said again,
But with a glimpse of sadness in her tone,
"I give it, Rhœcus, though a perilous gift;
An hour before the sunset meet me here."
And straightway there was nothing he could see
But the green glooms beneath the shadowy oak,
And not a sound came to his straining ears
But the low trickling rustle of the leaves,
And far away upon an emerald slope
The falter of an idle shepherd's pipe.

Now, in those days of simpleness and faith,
Men did not think that happy things were dreams

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[1] Another treatment of the theme of Rhœcus is found in Walter Savage Landor's *Hamadryad.*

Because they overstepped the narrow bourne
Of likelihood, but reverently deemed
Nothing too wondrous or too beautiful
To be the guerdon of a daring heart.
So Rhœcus made no doubt that he was blest,
And all along unto the city's gate
Earth seemed to spring beneath him as he walked,
The clear, broad sky looked bluer than its wont,
And he could scarce believe he had not wings,
Such sunshine seemed to glitter through his veins
Instead of blood, so light he felt and strange.

Young Rhœcus had a faithful heart enough,
But one that in the present dwelt too much,
And, taking with blithe welcome whatsoe'er
Chance gave of joy, was wholly bound in that,
Like the contented peasant of a vale,
Deemed it the world, and never looked beyond.
So, haply meeting in the afternoon
Some comrades who were playing at the dice,
He joined them and forgot all else beside.

The dice were rattling at the merriest,
And Rhœcus, who had met but sorry luck,
Just laughed in triumph at a happy throw,
When through the room there hummed a yellow bee
That buzzed about his ear with down-dropped legs
As if to light. And Rhœcus laughed and said,
Feeling how red and flushed he was with loss,
"By Venus! does he take me for a rose?"
And brushed him off with rough, impatient hand.
But still the bee came back, and thrice again
Rhœcus did beat him off with growing wrath.
Then through the window flew the wounded bee,
And Rhœcus, tracking him with angry eyes,
Saw a sharp mountain-peak of Thessaly
Against the red disc of the setting sun,—
And instantly the blood sank from his heart,
As if its very walls had caved away.
Without a word he turned, and, rushing forth,
Ran madly through the city and the gate,
And o'er the plain, which now the wood's long shade,
By the low sun thrown forward broad and dim,
Darkened wellnigh unto the city's wall.

Quite spent and out of breath he reached the tree,
And, listening fearfully, he heard once more
The low voice murmur "Rhœcus!" close at hand:
Whereat he looked around him, but could see
Naught but the deepening glooms beneath the oak.
Then sighed the voice, "Oh, Rhœcus! nevermore
Shalt thou behold me or by day or night,
Me, who would fain have blessed thee with a love
More ripe and bounteous than ever yet
Filled up with nectar any mortal heart:
But thou didst scorn my humble messenger,
And sent'st him back to me with bruised wings.
We spirits only show to gentle eyes.
We ever ask an undivided love,
And he who scorns the least of Nature's works
Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from all.
Farewell! for thou canst never see me more."

Then Rhœcus beat his breast, and groaned aloud
And cried, "Be pitiful! forgive me yet
This once, and I shall never need it more!"
"Alas!" the voice returned, "'tis thou art blind,[2]
Not I unmerciful; I can forgive,
But have no skill to heal thy spirit's eyes;
Only the soul hath power o'er itself."
With that again there murmured "Nevermore!"
And Rhœcus after heard no other sound,
Except the rattling of the oak's crisp leaves,
Like the long surf upon a distant shore,
Raking the sea-worn pebbles up and down.
The night had gathered round him: o'er the plain
The city sparkled with its thousand lights,

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[2] In one version of the legend the dryad in anger deprived Rhœcus of his eyesight.

And sounds of revel fell upon his ear
Harshly and like a curse; above, the sky,
With all its bright sublimity of stars,
Deepened, and on his forehead smote the breeze;
Beauty was all around him and delight,
But from that eve he was alone on earth.
1843

A CONTRAST

Thy love thou sentest oft to me,
And still as oft I thrust it back;
Thy messengers I could not see
In those who everything did lack,
The poor, the outcast, and the black.

Pride held his hand before mine eyes,
The world with flattery stuffed mine ears;
I looked to see a monarch's guise,
Nor dreamed thy love would knock for years,
Poor, naked, fettered, full of tears.

Yet, when I sent my love to thee,
Thou with a smile didst take it in,
And entertain'dst it royally,
Though grimed with earth, with hunger thin,
And leprous with the taint of sin.

Now every day thy love I meet,
As o'er the earth it wanders wide,
With weary step and bleeding feet,
Still knocking at the heart of pride
And offering grace, though still denied.
1845 1845

TO THE DANDELION

Dear common flower, that grow'st beside the way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,
First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and, full of pride, uphold,
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round
May match in wealth,—thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer-blooms may be.

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the Spanish prow
Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,
Nor wrinkled the lean brow
Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease;
'Tis the spring's largess, which she scatters now
To rich and poor alike, with lavish hand,
Though most hearts never understand
To take it at God's value, but pass by
The offered wealth with unrewarded eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy;
To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime;
The eyes thou givest me
Are in the heart, and heed not space or time:
Not in mid June the golden-cuirassed bee
Feels a more summer-like warm ravishment
In the white lily's breezy tent,
His fragrant Sybaris,[1] than I, when first
From the dark green thy yellow circles burst.

Then think I of deep shadows on the grass,
Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,
Where, as the breezes pass,
The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways,
Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,
Or whiten in the wind, of waters blue
That from the distance sparkle through
Some woodland gap, and of a sky above,
Where one white cloud like a stray lamb doth move.

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked with thee;
The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,
Who, from the dark old tree
Beside the door, sang clearly all day long,
And I, secure in childish piety,
Listened as if I heard an angel sing
With news from heaven, which he could bring
Fresh every day to my untainted ears,
When birds and flowers and I were happy peers.

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,
When thou, for all thy gold, so common art!
Thou teachest me to deem
More sacredly of every human heart,
Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam
Of heaven, and could some wondrous secret show
Did we but pay the love we owe,

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[1] An ancient Grecian city of southern Italy noted for its luxury.

And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
On all these living pages of God's book.
1845 1845

HEBE[1]

I saw the twinkle of white feet,
I saw the flash of robes descending;
Before her ran an influence fleet,
That bowed my heart like barley bending.

As, in bare fields, the searching bees
Pilot to blooms beyond our finding,
It led me on by sweet degrees,
Joy's simple honey-cells unbinding.

Those Graces were that seemed grim Fates;
With nearer love the sky leaned o'er me;
The long-sought Secret's golden gates
On musical hinges swung before me.

I saw the brimmed bowl in her grasp
Thrilling with godhood; like a lover
I sprang the proffered life to clasp;—
The beaker fell; the luck was over.

The Earth has drunk the vintage up;
What boots it patch the goblet's splinters?
Can summer fill the icy cup,
Whose treacherous crystal is but winter's?

O spendthrift, haste! await the Gods;
Their nectar crowns the lips of Patience;
Haste scatters on unthankful sods
The immortal gift in vain libations.

Coy Hebe flies from those that woo,
And shuns the hands would seize upon her,
Follow thy life, and she will sue
To pour for thee the cup of honor.
1847

AMBROSE

Never, surely, was holier man
Than Ambrose, since the world began;
With diet spare and raiment thin,
He shielded himself from the father of sin;
With bed of iron and scourgings oft,
His heart to God's hand as wax made soft.

Through earnest prayer and watchings long
He sought to know 'twixt right and wrong,
Much wrestling with the blessed Word
To make it yield the sense of the Lord,
That he might build a storm-proof creed
To fold the flock in at their need.

At last he builded a perfect faith,
Fenced round about with *The Lord thus saith,*
To himself he fitted the doorway's size,
Meted the light to the need of his eyes,
And knew, by a sure and inward sign,
That the work of his fingers was divine.

Then Ambrose said, "All those shall die
The eternal death who believe not as I";
And some were boiled, some burned in fire,
Some sawn in twain, that his heart's desire,
For the good of men's souls might be satisfied,
By the drawing of all to the righteous side.

One day, as Ambrose was seeking the truth
In his lonely walk, he saw a youth
Resting himself in the shade of a tree;
It had never been given him to see
So shining a face, and the good man thought
'Twere pity he should not believe as he ought.

So he set himself by the young man's side,
And the state of his soul with questions tried;
But the heart of the stranger was hardened indeed
Nor received the stamp of the one true creed.
And the spirit of Ambrose waxed sore to find
Such face the porch of so narrow a mind.

"As each beholds in cloud and fire
The shape that answers his own desire,
So each," said the youth, "in the Law shall find
The figure and features of his mind;
And to each in his mercy hath God allowed
His several pillar of fire and cloud."[1]

The soul of Ambrose burned with zeal
And holy wrath for the young man's weal:
"Believest thou then, most wretched youth,"
Cried he, "a dividual essence in Truth?
I fear me thy heart is too cramped with sin
To take the Lord in his glory in."

Now there bubbled beside them where they stood,
A fountain of waters sweet and good;
The youth to the streamlet's brink drew near

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[1] The personification of youth and spring; the cup-bearer of the gods.

[1] *Exodus* xiii. 21.

Saying, "Ambrose, thou maker of creeds, look here!"
Six vases of crystal then he took,
And set them along the edge of the brook.

"As into these vessels the water I pour,
There shall one hold less, another more,
And the water unchanged, in every case,
Shall put on the figure of the vase;
O thou, who wouldst unity make through strife,
Canst thou fit this sign to the Water of Life?"

When Ambrose looked up, he stood alone,
The youth and the stream and the vases were gone;
But he knew, by a sense of humbled grace,
He had talked with an angel face to face,
And felt his heart change inwardly,
As he fell on his knees beneath the tree.
1848 1848

THE VISION OF SIR LAUNFAL

PRELUDE TO PART FIRST

Over his keys the musing organist,
Beginning doubtfully and far away,
First lets his fingers wander as they list,
And builds a bridge from Dreamland for his lay:
Then, as the touch of his loved instrument
Gives hope and fervor, nearer draws his theme,
First guessed by faint auroral flushes sent
Along the wavering vista of his dream.

Not only around our infancy[1]
Doth heaven with all its splendors lie,
Daily, with souls that cringe and plot,
We Sinais[2] climb and know it not.

Over our manhood bend the skies;
Against our fallen and traitor lives
The great winds utter prophecies;
With our faint hearts the mountain strives,
Its arms outstretched, the druid[3] wood
Waits with its benedicite;[4]
And to our age's drowsy blood
Still shouts the inspiring sea.

Earth gets its price for what Earth gives us;
The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in,
The priest hath his fee who comes and shrives us,
We bargain for the graves we lie in;
At the devil's booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold;
For a cap and bells[5] our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking:
'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking,
No price is set on the lavish summer;
June may be had by the poorest comer.

And what is so rare as a day in June?[6]
Then, if ever, come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays:
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur, or see it glisten;
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
And, groping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers;
The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys;
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean
To be some happy creature's palace;
The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,
And lets his illumined being o'errun
With the deluge of summer it receives;
His mate feels the eggs beneath her wings,
And the heart in her dumb breast flutters and sings;
He sings to the wide world, and she to her nest,—
In the nice ear of Nature which song is the best?

Now is the high-tide of the year,
And whatever of life hath ebbed away
Comes flooding back with a ripply cheer,
Into every bare inlet and creek and bay;
Now the heart is so full that a drop overfills it,
We are happy now because God wills it;
No matter how barren the past may have been,

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[1] Cf. Wordsworth's *Ode, Intimations of Immortality* . . . . , l. 67.
[2] Moses ascended Sinai to talk with God. *Exodus* iii. 1; xix. 20.
[3] The druids, ancient Celtic priests, held the oak as sacred and worshiped in the forests.
[4] blessing (literally, *be ye blessed*)
[5] The regalia of the king's jester.
[6] Cf. Lowell's less familiar description of June in *Biglow Papers Second Series*, No. vi.

'Tis enough for us now that the leaves are green;
We sit in the warm shade and feel right well
How the sap creeps up and the blossoms swell;
We may shut our eyes but we cannot help knowing
That skies are clear and grass is growing;
The breeze comes whispering in our ear,
That dandelions are blossoming near,
That maize has sprouted, that streams are flowing,
That the river is bluer than the sky,
That the robin is plastering his house hard by;
And if the breeze kept the good news back,
For other couriers we should not lack;
We could guess it all by yon heifer's lowing,—
And hark! how clear bold chanticleer,
Warmed with the new wine of the year,
Tells all in his lusty crowing!

Joy comes, grief goes, we know not how;
Everything is happy now,
Everything is upward striving;
'Tis as easy now for the heart to be true
As for grass to be green or skies to be blue,—
'Tis the natural way of living:
Who knows whither the clouds have fled?
In the unscarred heavens they leave no wake;
And the eyes forget the tears they have shed,
The heart forgets its sorrow and ache;
The soul partakes the season's youth,
And the sulphurous rifts of passion and woe
Lie deep 'neath a silence pure and smooth,
Like burnt-out craters healed with snow.
What wonder if Sir Launfal now
Remembered the keeping of his vow?

PART FIRST

I

"My golden spurs now bring to me,
And bring to me my richest mail,
For tomorrow I go over land and sea
In search of the Holy Grail;[7]
Shall never a bed for me be spread,
Nor shall a pillow be under my head,
Till I begin my vow to keep;
Here on the rushes will I sleep,
And perchance there may come a vision true
Ere day create the world anew."
Slowly Sir Launfal's eyes grew dim,
Slumber fell like a cloud on him,
And into his soul the vision flew.

II

The crows flapped over by twos and threes,
In the pool drowsed the cattle up to their knees,
The little birds sang as if it were
The one day of summer in all the year,
And the very leaves seemed to sing on the trees,
The castle alone in the landscape lay
Like an outpost of winter, dull and gray;
'Twas the proudest hall in the North Countree,
And never its gates might opened be,
Save to lord or lady of high degree;
Summer besieged it on every side,
But the churlish stone her assaults defied;
She could not scale the chilly wall,
Though round it for leagues her pavilions tall
Stretched left and right,
Over the hills and out of sight;
Green and broad was every tent,
And out of each a murmur went
Till the breeze fell off at night.

III

The drawbridge dropped with a surly clang,
And through the dark arch a charger sprang,
Bearing Sir Launfal, the maiden[8] knight,
In his gilded mail, that flamed so bright
It seemed the dark castle had gathered all
Those shafts the fierce sun had shot over its wall
In his siege of three hundred summers long,

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[7] "According to the mythology of the Romancers, the San Greal, or Holy Grail, was the cup out of which Jesus Christ partook of the Last Supper with his disciples. It was brought into England by Joseph of Arimathea, and remained there, an object of pilgrimage and adoration, for many years in the keeping of his lineal descendants. It was incumbent upon those who had charge of it to be chaste in thought, word, and deed; but one of the keepers having broken this condition, the Holy Grail disappeared. From that time it was a favorite enterprise of the knights of Arthur's court to go in search of it. . . .

"The plot (if I may give that name to anything so slight) of the following poem is my own, and, to serve its purposes, I have enlarged the circle of competition in search of the miraculous cup in such a manner as to include not only other persons than the heroes of the Round Table, but also a period of time subsequent to the date of King Arthur's reign."—LOWELL.

[8] untried

And, binding them all in one blazing sheaf,
Had cast them forth: so, young and strong,
And lightsome as a locust-leaf,
Sir Launfal flashed forth in his maiden mail,
To seek in all climes for the Holy Grail.

IV

It was morning on hill and stream and tree,
And morning in the young knight's heart;
Only the castle moodily
Rebuffed the gifts of the sunshine free,
And gloomed by itself apart;
The season brimmed all other things up
Full as the rain fills the pitcher-plant's cup.

V

As Sir Launfal made morn through the darksome gate,
He was 'ware of a leper, crouched by the same,
Who begged with his hand and moaned as he sate;
And a loathing over Sir Launfal came;
The sunshine went out of his soul with a thrill,
The flesh 'neath his armor 'gan shrink and crawl,
And midway its leap his heart stood still
Like a frozen waterfall;
For this man, so foul and bent of stature,
Rasped harshly against his dainty nature,
And seemed the one blot on the summer morn,—
So he tossed him a piece of gold in scorn.

VI

The leper raised not the gold from the dust:
"Better to me the poor man's crust,
Better the blessing of the poor,
Though I turn me empty from his door;
That is no true alms which the hand can hold;
He gives nothing but worthless gold
Who gives from a sense of duty;
But he who gives but a slender mite,
And gives to that which is out of sight,
That thread of the all-sustaining Beauty
Which runs through all and doth all unite,—
The hand cannot clasp the whole of his alms,
The heart outstretches its eager palms,
For a god goes with it and makes it store
To the soul that was starving in darkness before."

PRELUDE TO PART SECOND

Down swept the chill wind from the mountain peak,
From the snow five thousand summers old;
On open wold and hill-top bleak
It had gathered all the cold,
And whirled it like sleet on the wanderer's cheek.
It carried a shiver everywhere
From the unleafed boughs and pastures bare;
The little brook heard it and built a roof
'Neath which he could house him, winter-proof;
All night by the white stars' frosty gleams
He groined his arches and matched his beams;
Slender and clear were his crystal spars
As the lashes of light that trim the stars:
He sculptured every summer delight
In his halls and chambers out of sight;
Sometimes his tinkling waters slipt
Down through a frost-leaved forest-crypt,
Long, sparkling aisles of steel-stemmed trees
Bending to counterfeit a breeze;
Sometimes the roof no fretwork knew
But silvery mosses that downward grew;
Sometimes it was carved in sharp relief
With quaint arabesques of ice-fern leaf;
Sometimes it was simply smooth and clear
For the gladness of heaven to shine through, and here
He had caught the nodding bulrush-tops
And hung them thickly with diamond drops,
That crystaled the beams of moon and sun,
And made a star of every one:
No mortal builder's most rare device
Could match this winter-palace of ice;
'Twas as if every image that mirrored lay
In his depths serene through the summer day,
Each fleeting shadow of earth and sky,
Lest the happy model should be lost,
Had been mimicked in fairy masonry
By the elfin builders of the frost.

Within the hall are song and laughter,
The cheeks of Christmas glow red and jolly,
And sprouting is every corbel[9] and rafter
With lightsome green of ivy and holly;
Through the deep gulf of the chimney wide

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[9] bracket

Wallows the Yule-log's roaring tide;
The broad flame-pennons droop and flap
And belly and tug as a flag in the wind;
Like a locust shrills the imprisoned sap,
Hunted to death in its galleries blind;
And swift little troops of silent sparks,
Now pausing, now scattering away as in fear,
Go threading the soot-forest's tangled darks
Like herds of startled deer.

But the wind without was eager and sharp,
Of Sir Launfal's gray hair it makes a harp,
And rattles and wrings
The icy strings,
Singing, in dreary monotone,
A Christmas carol of its own,
Whose burden still, as he might guess,
Was—"Shelterless, shelterless, shelterless!"
The voice of the seneschal flared like a torch
As he shouted the wanderer away from the porch,
And he sat in the gateway and saw all night
The great hall-fire, so cheery and bold,
Through the window-slits of the castle old,
Build out its piers of ruddy light
Against the drift of the cold.

Part Second

I

There was never a leaf on bush or tree,
The bare boughs rattled shudderingly;
The river was dumb and could not speak,
For the weaver Winter its shroud had spun;
A single crow on the tree-top bleak
From his shining feathers shed off the cold sun.
Again it was morning, but shrunk and cold,
As if her veins were sapless and old,
And she rose up decrepitly
For a last dim look at earth and sea.

II

Sir Launfal turned from his own hard gate,
For another heir in his earldom sate;
An old, bent man, worn out and frail,
He came back from seeking the Holy Grail;
Little he recked of his earldom's loss,
No more on his surcoat was blazoned the cross,
But deep in his soul the sign he wore,
The badge of the suffering and the poor.

III

Sir Launfal's raiment thin and spare
Was idle mail 'gainst the barbed air,
For it was just at the Christmas time;
So he mused, as he sat, of a sunnier clime,
And sought for a shelter from cold and snow
In the light and warmth of long-ago;
He sees the snake-like caravan crawl
O'er the edge of the desert, black and small,
Then nearer and nearer, till, one by one,
He can count the camels in the sun,
As over the red-hot sands they pass
To where, in its slender necklace of grass,
The little spring laughed and leapt in the shade,
And with its own self like an infant played,
And waved its signal of palms.

IV

"For Christ's sweet sake, I beg an alms;"—
The happy camels may reach the spring,
But Sir Launfal sees only the grewsome thing,
The leper, lank as the rain-blanched bone,
That cowers beside him, a thing as lone
And white as the ice-isles of Northern seas
In the desolate horror of his disease.

V

And Sir Launfal said,—"I behold in thee
An image of Him who died on the tree;
Thou also hast had thy crown of thorns,—
Thou also hast had the world's buffets and scorns,—
And to thy life were not denied
The wounds in the hands and feet and side:
Mild Mary's Son, acknowledge me;
Behold, through him, I give to thee!"

VI

Then the soul of the leper stood up in his eyes
And looked at Sir Launfal, and straightway he
Remembered in what a haughtier guise
He had flung an alms to leprosie,
When he girt his young life up in gilded mail
And set forth in search of the Holy Grail.
The heart within him was ashes and dust;
He parted in twain his single crust,
He broke the ice on the streamlet's brink,
And gave the leper to eat and drink,
'Twas a moldy crust of coarse brown bread,
'Twas water out of a wooden bowl,—

Yet with fine wheaten bread was the leper fed,
  And 'twas red wine he drank with his thirsty soul.

VII

As Sir Launfal mused with a downcast face,
A light shone round about the place;
The leper no longer crouched at his side,
But stood before him glorified,
Shining and tall and fair and straight
As the pillar that stood by the Beautiful Gate,—[10]
Himself the Gate whereby men can
Enter the temple of God in Man.

VIII

His words were shed softer than leaves from the pine,
And they fell on Sir Launfal as snows on the brine,
That mingle their softness and quiet in one
With the shaggy unrest they float down upon;
And the voice that was softer than silence said,
"Lo, it is I, be not afraid!
In many climes, without avail,
Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail;
Behold it is here,—this cup which thou
Didst fill at the streamlet for me but now;
This crust is my body broken for thee,
This water His blood that died on the tree:
The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need;
Not what we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three,
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me."

IX

Sir Launfal awoke as from a swound:
"The Grail in my castle here is found!
Hang my idle armor up on the wall,
Let it be the spider's banquet hall;
He must be fenced with stronger mail
Who would seek and find the Holy Grail."

X

The castle gate stands open now,
  And the wanderer is welcome to the hall
As the hangbird[11] is to the elm-tree bough;
No longer scowl the turrets tall,
The Summer's long siege at last is o'er;
When the first poor outcast went in at the door,
She entered with him in disguise,
And mastered the fortress by surprise;
There is no spot she loves so well on ground,
She lingers and smiles there the whole year round;
The meanest serf on Sir Launfal's land
Has hall and bower at his command;
And there's no poor man in the North Countree
But is lord of the earldom as much as he.

1848 1848

From A FABLE FOR CRITICS[1]

. . . .

"There comes Emerson first, whose rich words, every one,
Are like gold nails in temples to hang trophies on,
Whose prose is grand verse, while his verse, the Lord knows,
Is some of it pr—— No, 'tis not even prose;
I'm speaking of meters; some poems have welled
From those rare depths of soul that have ne'er been excelled;
They're not epics, but that doesn't matter a pin,
In creating, the only hard thing's to begin;
A grass-blade's no easier to make than an oak,
If you've once found the way, you've achieved the grand stroke;
In the worst of his poems are mines of rich matter,
But thrown in a heap with a crash and a clatter;
Now it is not one thing nor another alone
Makes a poem, but rather the general tone,

---

[10] *Acts* iii. 2.

[11] The oriole, or any bird building a hanging nest.

[1] A few lines from Lowell's humorous preface will explain the spirit in which this piece of penetrating banter was written: "To the Reader: This trifle, begun to please only myself and my own private fancy, was laid on the shelf. But some friends, who had seen it, induced me, by dint of saying they liked it, to put it in print. . . . Having scrawled at full gallop (as far as that goes) in a style that is neither good verse nor bad prose, and being a person whom nobody knows, some people will say I am rather more free with my readers than it is becoming to be. . . . All the characters sketched in this slight *jeu d'esprit*, though, it may be, they seem, here and there, rather free, and drawn from a Mephistophelian standpoint, are *meant* to be faithful, and that is the grand point, and none but an owl would feel sore at a rub from a jester who tells you, without any subterfuge, that he sits in Diogenes' tub."

The something pervading, uniting the whole,
The before unconceived, unconceivable soul,
So that just in removing this trifle or that, you
Take away, as it were, a chief limb of the statue;
Roots, wood, bark, and leaves, singly perfect may be,
But, clapt hodge-podge together, they don't make a tree.

"But to come back to Emerson (whom by the way,
I believe we left waiting),—his is, we may say,
A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders, whose range
Has Olympus[2] for one pole, for t'other the Exchange;[3]
He seems, to my thinking, (although I'm afraid
The comparison must, long ere this, have been made),
A Plotinus-Montaigne,[4] where the Egyptian's gold mist
And the Gascon's shrewd wit cheek-by-jowl coexist;
All admire, and yet scarcely six converts he's got
To I don't (nor they either) exactly know what;
For though he builds glorious temples, 'tis odd
He leaves never a doorway to get in a god.
'Tis refreshing to old-fashioned people like me,
To meet such a primitive Pagan as he,
In whose mind all creation is duly respected
As parts of himself—just a little projected;
And who's willing to worship the stars and the sun,
A convert to—nothing but Emerson.
So perfect a balance there is in his head,
That he talks of things sometimes as if they were dead;
Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of that sort,
He looks at as merely ideas; in short,
As if they were fossils stuck round in a cabinet,
Of such vast extent that our earth's a mere dab in it;
Composed just as he is inclined to conjecture her,
Namely, one part pure earth, ninety-nine parts pure lecturer;
You are filled with delight at his clear demonstration,
Each figure, word, gesture, just fits the occasion,
With the quiet precision of science he'll sort 'em,
But you can't help suspecting the whole a *post mortem*.

"There are persons, mole-blind to the soul's make and style,
Who insist on a likeness 'twixt him and Carlyle;
To compare him with Plato would be vastly fairer,
Carlyle's the more burly, but E. is the rarer;
He sees fewer objects, but clearlier, truelier,
If C.'s as original, E.'s more peculiar;
That he's more of a man you might say of the one,
Of the other he's more of an Emerson;
C.'s the Titan,[5] as shaggy of mind as of limb,—
E. the clear-eyed Olympian, rapid and slim;
The one's two-thirds Norseman, the other half Greek,
Where the one's most abounding, the other's to seek;
C.'s generals require to be seen in the mass—
E.'s specialties gain if enlarged by the glass;
C. gives nature and God his own fits of the blues,
And rims common-sense things with mystical hues,—
E. sits in a mystery calm and intense,
And looks coolly around him with sharp common sense;
C. shows you how every-day matters unite
With the dim transdiurnal[6] recesses of night,—
While E., in a plain, preternatural way,
Makes mysteries matters of mere every day;

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[2] the home of the gods
[3] the mart of business
[4] Plotinus was an idealistic Greek philosopher born in Egypt c. 204 A. D. Montaigne, 1533-1592, a French philosopher and essayist whose work is marked by shrewd worldliness, lived in Bordeaux in what was once the old duchy of Guienne and Gascony.
[5] The giant race, descended from Uranus and Gæa (Heaven and Earth).
[6] Beyond the confines of the day.

C. draws all his characters quite *à la* Fuseli,[7]—
He don't[8] sketch their bundles of muscles and thews illy,
But he paints with a brush so untamed and profuse,
They seem nothing but bundles of muscles and thews;
E. is rather like Flaxman,[9] lines strait and severe,
And a colorless outline, but full, round, and clear;—
To the men he thinks worthy he frankly accords
The design of a white marble statue in words.
C. labors to get at the center, and then
Take a reckoning from there of his actions and men;
E. calmly assumes the said center as granted,
And, given himself, has whatever is wanted.

"He has imitators in scores, who omit
No part of the man but his wisdom and wit,—
Who go carefully o'er the sky-blue of his brain,
And when he has skimmed it once, skim it again;
If at all they resemble him, you may be sure it is
Because their shoals mirror his mists and obscurities,
As a mud-puddle seems deep as heaven for a minute,
While a cloud that floats o'er is reflected within it.

"There comes ——,[10] for instance; to see him's rare sport,
Tread in Emerson's tracks with legs painfully short;
How he jumps, how he strains, and gets red in the face,
To keep step with the mystagogue's natural pace!
He follows as close as a stick to a rocket,
His fingers exploring the prophet's each pocket.
Fie, for shame, brother bard; with good fruit of your own,
Can't you let Neighbor Emerson's orchards alone?
Besides, 'tis no use, you'll not find e'en a core,—
——[11] has picked up all the windfalls before.
They might strip every tree, and E. never would catch 'em,
His Hesperides[12] have no rude dragon to watch 'em;
When they send him a dishful, and ask him to try 'em,
He never suspects how the sly rogues came by 'em;
He wonders why 'tis there are none such his trees on,
And thinks 'em the best he has tasted this season.

. . . .

"There is Bryant, as quiet, as cool, and as dignified,
As a smooth, silent iceberg, that never is ignified,
Save when by reflection 'tis kindled o' nights
With a semblance of flame by the chill Northern Lights.
He may rank (Griswold[13] says so) first bard of your nation,
(There's no doubt that he stands in supreme iceolation),
Your topmost Parnassus[14] he may set his heel on,
But no warm applauses come, peal following peal on,—
He's too smooth and too polished to hang any zeal on:
Unqualified merits, I'll grant, if you choose, he has 'em,
But he lacks the one merit of kindling enthusiasm;
If he stir you at all, it is just, on my soul,
Like being stirred up with the very North Pole.

"He is very nice reading in summer, but *inter*
Nos,[15] we don't want *extra* freezing in winter;
Take him up in the depth of July, my advice is,

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[7] John Henry Fuseli, 1741-1825, a Swiss-English painter of powerful imagination rather than technical excellence.
[8] Notice the great liberties Lowell takes. Cf. lines 620 and 817.
[9] John Flaxman, 1755-1826, an English sculptor.
[10] Thoreau?
[11] Alcott?
[12] The golden apples of the mythical gardens.
[13] Rufus Wilmot Griswold compiled the anthologies *Poets and Poetry of America* (1842) and *Prose Writers of America* (1846).
[14] A mountain ridge northwest of Athens, supposed to be the haunt of Apollo and the Muses; hence the source of music and poetry.
[15] between ourselves

When you feel an Egyptian devotion to ices,[16]
But, deduct all you can, there's enough that's right good in him,
He has a true soul for field, river, and wood in him;
And his heart, in the midst of brick walls, or where'er it is,
Glows, softens, and thrills with the tenderest charities,—
To you mortals that delve in this trade-ridden planet?
No, to old Berkshire's hills, with their limestone and granite.
If you're one who *in loco* (add *foco* here) *desipis*,[17]
You will get of his outermost heart (as I guess) a piece;
But you'd get deeper down if you came as a precipice,
And would break the last seal of its inwardest fountain,
If you only could palm yourself off for a mountain.
Mr. Quivis,[18] or somebody quite as discerning,
Some scholar who's hourly expecting his learning,
Calls B. the American Wordsworth; but Wordsworth
Is worth near as much as your whole tuneful herd's worth.
No, don't be absurd, he's an excellent Bryant;
But, my friends, you'll endanger the life of your client,
By attempting to stretch him up into a giant:
If you choose to compare him, I think there are two per-
sons fit for a parallel—Thomson and Cowper;[19]
I don't mean exactly,—there's something of each,
There's T.'s love of nature, C.'s penchant to preach;
Just mix up their minds so that C.'s spice of craziness
Shall balance and neutralize T.'s turn for laziness,
And it gives you a brain cool, quite frictionless, quiet,
Whose internal police nips the buds of all riot,—
A brain like a permanent strait-jacket put on
The heart which strives vainly to burst off a button,—
A brain which, without being slow or mechanic,
Does more than a larger less drilled, more volcanic;
He's a Cowper condensed, with no craziness bitten,
And the advantage that Wordsworth before him had written.

"But, my dear little bardlings, don't prick up your ears,
Nor suppose I would rank you and Bryant as peers;
If I call him an iceberg, I don't mean to say
There is nothing in that which is grand, in its way;
He is almost the one of your poets that knows
How much grace, strength, and dignity lie in Repose;
If he sometimes fall short, he is too wise to mar
His thought's modest fulness by going too far;
'Twould be well if your authors should all make a trial
Of what virtue there is in severe self-denial,
And measure their writings by Hesiod's staff,[20]
Which teaches that all has less value than half.

"There is Whittier, whose swelling and vehement heart
Strains the strait-breasted drab of the Quaker apart,
And reveals the live Man, still supreme and erect,
Underneath the bemummying wrappers of sect;
There was ne'er a man born who had more of the swing
Of the true lyric bard and all that kind of thing;

---

[16] Note the pun on Isis the chief goddess of the Egyptians.

[17] "If you're one who *in a place* (by the *fire*) *can be foolish*."

[18] Mr. Anyone

[19] English poets of the 18th century.

> "To demonstrate quickly and easily how perversely absurd 'tis to sound this name *Cowper*,
> As people in general call him named *super*,
> I remark that he rimes it himself with horse-trooper."—(Lowell's note.)

[20] The poems of Hesiod, who is noted for his sententious philosophy, were not recited to the accompaniment of a harp as were those of Homer, but the reciter held in his hand a laurel branch or staff.

And his failures arise (though perhaps he don't know it)
From the very same cause that has made him a poet,—
A fervor of mind which knows no separation
'Twixt simple excitement and pure inspiration,
As my Pythoness[21] erst sometimes erred from not knowing
If 'twere I or mere wind through her tripod was blowing;
Let his mind once get head in its favorite direction
And the torrent of verse bursts the dams of reflection,
While, borne with the rush of the meter along,
The poet may chance to go right or go wrong,
Content with the whirl and delirium of song;
Then his grammar's not always correct, nor his rimes,[22]
And he's prone to repeat his own lyrics sometimes,
Not his best, though, for those are struck off at white-heats
When the heart in his breast like a trip-hammer beats,
And can ne'er be repeated again any more
Than they could have been carefully plotted before:
Like old what's-his-name[23] there at the battle of Hastings
(Who, however, gave more than mere rhythmical bastings),
Our Quaker leads off metaphorical fights
For reform and whatever they call human rights,
Both singing and striking in front of the war
And hitting his foes with the mallet of Thor;[24]
Anne haec, one exclaims, on beholding his knocks,
Vestis filii tui,[25] O, leather-clad Fox?
Can that be thy son, in the battle's mid din,
Preaching brotherly love and then driving it in
To the brain of the tough old Goliah[26] of sin,
With the smoothest of pebbles from Castaly's spring,[27]
Impressed on his hard moral sense with a sling?

"All honor and praise to the right-hearted bard
Who was true to The Voice when such service was hard,
Who himself was so free he dared sing for the slave
When to look but a protest in silence was brave;
All honor and praise to the women and men
Who spoke out for the dumb and the down-trodden then!
I need not to name them, already for each
I see History preparing the statue and niche;
They were harsh, but shall *you* be so shocked at hard words
Who have beaten your pruning-hooks up into swords,[28]
Whose rewards and hurrahs men are surer to gain
By the reaping of men and of women than grain?
Why should *you* stand aghast at their fierce wordy war, if
You scalp one another for Bank or for Tariff?[29]
Your calling them cut-throats and knaves all day long
Don't prove that the use of hard language is wrong;
While the World's heart beats quicker to think of such men

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[21] A woman having power of divination, as the priestess at Delphi.

[22] Cf. *Maud Muller:*
"For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: 'It might have been!'"

[23] Taillefer, Norman juggler and minstrel, who struck the first blow at the battle of Hastings, 1066, rode at the head of the Norman army singing songs of Roland and Charlemagne and throwing in the air and catching again his sword; before he fell he used his sword in earnest.

[24] The hammer Mjöllnir, the Crusher, of Thor, the Scandinavian god of thunder, returned to his hand of itself when he had hurled it.

[25] "Is this indeed the dress of thy son?" *Genesis* xxxvii. 32. George Fox, 1624-1691, a shoemaker, said to have worn leather breeches, was the founder of The Society of Friends, who, though called Quakers because "they bade the people tremble at the word of the Lord," were always known for their love of peace. Carlyle's rhapsody over his costume (*Heroes and Hero Worship*), which Lowell apparently follows, is probably ill-founded.

[26] 1 *Samuel* xvii.

[27] Castalia, or Castaly, was an ancient spring on Mt. Parnassus sacred to the Muses and to Apollo.

[28] *Joel* iii. 10.

[29] The question as to the constitutionality of establishing a National Bank had agitated the country since 1787, and had not been finally settled until 1846. The tariff question had also caused much feeling. See Calhoun's and Webster's speeches, p. 520 and p. 529.

As signed Tyranny's doom with a bloody steel-pen,
While on Fourth-of-Julys beardless orators fright one
With hints at Harmodius and Aristogeiton,[30]
You need not look shy at your sisters and brothers
Who stab with sharp words for the freedom of others;—
No, a wreath, twine a wreath for the loyal and true
Who, for sake of the many, dared stand with the few,
Not of blood-spattered laurel for enemies braved,
But of broad, peaceful oak-leaves for citizens saved!

. . . .

"There is Hawthorne, with genius so shrinking and rare
That you hardly at first see the strength that is there;
A frame so robust, with a nature so sweet,
So earnest, so graceful, so solid, so fleet,
Is worth a descent from Olympus[31] to meet;
'Tis as if a rough oak that for ages had stood,
With his gnarled bony branches like ribs of the wood,
Should bloom, after cycles of struggle and scathe,
With a single anemone trembly and rathe;[32]
His strength is so tender, his wildness so meek,
That a suitable parallel sets one to seek,—
He's a John Bunyan Fouqué, a Puritan Tieck;[33]
When Nature was shaping him, clay was not granted
For making so full-sized a man as she wanted,
So, to fill out her model, a little she spared
From some finer-grained stuff for a woman prepared,
And she could not have hit a more excellent plan
For making him fully and perfectly man.
The success of her scheme gave her so much delight,
That she tried it again, shortly after, in Dwight;[34]
Only, while she was kneading and shaping the clay,
She sang to her work in her sweet childish way,
And found, when she'd put the last touch to his soul,
That the music had somehow got mixed with the whole.

"Here's Cooper, who's written six volumes to show
He's as good as a lord:[35] well, let's grant that he's so;
If a person prefer that description of praise,
Why, a coronet's certainly cheaper than bays;
But he need take no pains to convince us he's not
(As his enemies say) the American Scott.
Choose any twelve men, and let C. read aloud
That one of his novels of which he's most proud,
And I'd lay any bet that, without ever quitting
Their box, they'd be all, to a man, for acquitting.
He has drawn you one character, though, that is new,
One wildflower he's plucked that is wet with the dew
Of this fresh Western world, and, the thing not to mince,
He has done naught but copy it ill ever since;
His Indians, with proper respect be it said,
Are just Natty Bumppo[36] daubed over with red,
And his very Long Toms[37] are the same useful Nat,
Rigged up in duck pants and a sou'-wester hat,
(Though once in a Coffin, a good chance was found
To have slipt the old fellow away underground).
All his other men-figures are clothes upon sticks,

---

[30] Two Athenians, who killed Hipparchus, tyrant of Athens, and were executed 514 B. C.

[31] The home of the gods.

[32] early, cf. "rather" (sooner)

[33] I. e., a union of the allegorical vision of Bunyan with the romantic imagination of Baron de La Motte Fouqué, 1777-1843, the German author of *Undine;* or the union of the soberness of the Puritan with the romanticism of Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853), a German novelist.

[34] John Sullivan Dwight, 1813-1893, a musical critic of Boston.

[35] Cooper's display of ancestry annoyed as well as amused his countrymen. Poets were in ancient times crowned with bay leaves. See l. 1022.

[36] In the Leather-stocking Tales.

[37] Long Tom Coffin, a sailor in *The Pilot.*

The *dernière chemise*[38] of a man in a fix,
(As a captain besieged, when his garrison's small,
Sets up caps upon poles to be seen o'er the wall);
And the women he draws from one model don't vary,
All sappy as maples and flat as a prairie.
When a character's wanted, he goes to the task
As a cooper would do in composing a cask;
He picks out the staves, of their qualities heedful,
Just hoops them together as tight as is needful,
And, if the best fortune should crown the attempt, he
Has made at the most something wooden and empty.

"Don't suppose I would underrate Cooper's abilities,
If I thought you'd do that, I should feel very ill at ease;
The men who have given to *one* character life
And objective existence, are not very rife,
You may number them all, both prose-writers and singers,
Without overrunning the bounds of your fingers,
And Natty won't go to oblivion quicker
Than Adams the parson or Primrose the vicar.[39]

"There is one thing in Cooper I like, too, and that is
That on manners he lectures his countrymen gratis,
Not precisely so either, because, for a rarity,
He is paid for his tickets in unpopularity.[40]
Now he may overcharge his American pictures,
But you'll grant there's a good deal of truth in his strictures;
And I honor the man who is willing to sink
Half his present repute for the freedom to think,
And, when he has thought, be his cause strong or weak,
Will risk t'other half for the freedom to speak,
Caring naught for what vengeance the mob has in store,
Let that mob be the upper ten thousand or lower.

"There are truths you Americans need to be told,
And it never'll refute them to swagger and scold;
John Bull, looking o'er the Atlantic, in choler
At your aptness for trade, says you worship the dollar;
But to scorn such eye-dollar-try's what very few do,
And John goes to that church as often as you do.
No matter what John says, don't try to outcrow him,
'Tis enough to go quietly on and outgrow him;
Like most fathers, Bull hates to see Number One
Displacing himself in the mind of his son,
And detests the same faults in himself he'd neglected
When he sees them again in his child's glass reflected;
To love one another you're too like by half.
If he is a bull, you're a pretty stout calf,
And tear your own pasture for naught but to show
What a nice pair of horns you're beginning to grow.

"There are one or two things I should just like to hint,
For you don't often get the truth told you in print;
The most of you (this is what strikes all beholders)
Have a mental and physical stoop in the shoulders;
Though you ought to be free as the winds and the waves,
You've the gait and the manners of runaway slaves;
Tho' you brag of your New World, you don't half believe in it,
And as much of the Old as is possible weave in it;
Your goddess of freedom, a tight, buxom girl,
With lips like a cherry and teeth like a pearl,

---

[38] last shirt

[39] Parson Abraham Adams is a whimsical but manly character in Henry Fielding's novel *Joseph Andrews* (1742). Mr. Primrose is the title character of *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) by Goldsmith.

[40] Cooper, with most loyal intentions but with little tact, on his return after seven years abroad criticized Americans very severely and aroused much antagonism.

With eyes bold as Herè's, and hair floating free,
And full of the sun as the spray of the sea,
Who can sing at a husking or romp at a shearing,
Who can trip through the forests alone without fearing,
Who can drive home the cows with a song through the grass,
Keeps glancing aside into Europe's cracked glass,
Hides her red hands in gloves, pinches up her lithe waist,
And makes herself wretched with transmarine taste;
She loses her fresh country charm when she takes
Any mirror except her own rivers and lakes.

"You steal Englishmen's books[41] and think Englishmen's thought,
With their salt on her tail your wild eagle is caught;
Your literature suits its each whisper and motion
To what will be thought of it over the ocean;
The cast clothes of Europe your statesmanship tries
And mumbles again the old blarneys and lies;—
Forget Europe wholly, your veins throb with blood,
To which the dull current in hers is but mud;
Let her sneer, let her say your experiment fails,
In her voice there's a tremble e'en now while she rails,
And your shore will soon be in the nature of things
Covered thick with gilt driftwood of runaway kings,
Where alone, as it were in a Longfellow's Waif
Her fugitive pieces will find themselves safe.[42]
O, my friends, thank your God, if you have one, that he
'Twixt the Old World and you set the gulf of a sea;
Be strong-backed, brown-handed, upright as your pines,
By the scale of a hemisphere shape your designs,
Be true to yourselves and this new nineteenth age,
As a statue by Powers,[43] or a picture by Page,
Plow, sail, forge, build, carve, paint, all things make new,
To your own New-World instincts contrive to be true,
Keep your ears open wide to the Future's first call,
Be whatever you will, but yourselves first of all,
Stand fronting the dawn on Toil's heaven-scaling peaks,
And become my new race of more practical Greeks.—
Hem! your likeness at present I shudder to tell o't,
Is that you have your slaves, and the Greek had his helot."

. . . .

"There comes Poe, with his raven, like Barnaby Rudge,[44]
Three-fifths of him genius and two-fifths sheer fudge,
Who talks like a book of iambs and pentameters,[45]
In a way to make people of common-sense damn meters,
Who has written some things quite the best of their kind,
But the heart somehow seems all squeezed out by the mind,
Who—but hey-day! What's this? Messieurs Mathews and Poe,[46]
You mustn't fling mud-balls at Longfellow so,
Does it make a man worse that his character's such
As to make his friends love him (as you think) too much?
Why, there is not a bard at this moment alive
More willing than he that his fellows should thrive,
While you are abusing him thus, even now

---

[41] The question of an international copyright law between England and the United States was long a question of somewhat bitter discussion.

[42] Longfellow's collection of scattered prose pieces, *Driftwood*, though projected in 1852 was not published until 1857.

[43] Hiram Powers, 1805-1873; William Page, 1811-1885.

[44] In Dickens's *Barnaby Rudge* a raven figures prominently.

[45] Poe in his critical essay *The Philosophy of Composition* had explained with great technical detail how he wrote *The Raven*.

[46] Poe in a review of *Voices of the Night* in *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, "Mr. Longfellow and Other Plagiarists," had accused Longfellow of plagiarism. The Mr. Mathews is probably Cornelius Mathews, a New York writer.

He would help either one of you out of a slough;
You may say that he's smooth and all that till you're hoarse,
But remember that elegance also is force;
After polishing granite as much as you will,
The heart keeps its tough old persistency still;
Deduct all you can *that* still keeps you at bay;
Why, he'll live till men weary of Collins and Gray.[47]
I'm not overfond of Greek meters in English,
To me rime's a gain, so it be not too jinglish,
And your modern hexameter verses are no more
Like Greek ones than sleek Mr. Pope is like Homer;[48]
As the roar of the sea to the coo of a pigeon is,
So, compared to your moderns, sounds old Melesigenes;[49]
I may be too partial, the reason, perhaps, o't is
That I've heard the old blind man recite his own rhapsodies,
And my ear with that music impregnate may be,
Like the poor exiled shell with the soul of the sea,
Or as one can't bear Strauss[50] when his nature is cloven
To its deeps within deeps by the stroke of Beethoven;
But, set that aside, and 'tis truth that I speak,
Had Theocritus[51] written in English, not Greek,
I believe that his exquisite sense would scarce change a line
In that rare, tender, virgin-like pastoral Evangeline.
That's not ancient nor modern, its place is apart
Where time has no sway, in the realm of pure Art,
'Tis a shrine of retreat from Earth's hubbub and strife
As quiet and chaste as the author's own life.

. . . .

"What! Irving? thrice welcome, warm heart and fine brain,
You bring back the happiest spirit from Spain,[52]
And the gravest sweet humor, that ever were there
Since Cervantes[53] met death in his gentle despair;
Nay, don't be embarrassed, nor look so beseeching,—
I shan't run directly against my own preaching,
And, having just laughed at their Raphaels and Dantes,[54]
Go to setting you up beside matchless Cervantes;
But allow me to speak what I honestly feel,—
To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick Steele,
Throw in all of Addison, *minus* the chill,[55]
With the whole of that partnership's stock and good-will,
Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er, as a spell,
The fine *old* English Gentleman, simmer it well,
Sweeten just to your own private liking, then strain,
That only the finest and clearest remain,
Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives
From the warm lazy sun loitering down through green leaves,
And you'll find a choice nature, not wholly deserving
A name either English or Yankee,—just Irving.

. . . .

"There's Holmes, who is matchless among you for wit;
A Leyden-jar[56] always full-charged, from which flit
The electrical tingles of hit after hit;

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[47] English poets of the 18th century.
[48] *Evangeline* was written in dactyllic hexameters unrimed, the meter corresponding to that of Homer's *Iliad*. Pope's translation of the latter is so free as to be hardly Homeric.
[49] Meles-born, a name used occasionally for Homer, who, tradition relates, composed some of his poems in a cave near the source of the river Meles in Ionia near the ancient Smyrna.
[50] Johann Strauss, an Austrian composer (1804-1849), famous for his waltz music.
[51] The great Sicilian-Greek pastoral poet of the third century B. C.
[52] Irving returned to America in 1846 from his second residence in Spain.
[53] Spanish poet and novelist, 1547-1616, author of *Don Quixote*. Three years before his death he entered the order of the Franciscan friars.
[54] Raphael the greatest painter and Dante the greatest poet of Italy. Cf. lines 1618-1635, which apparently were written earlier.
[55] The warm-hearted Steele and the decorous Addison wrote *The Spectator* together.
[56] A glass jar used in condensing electricity and capable of giving a strong shock.

In long poems 'tis painful sometimes and invites
A thought of the way the new Telegraph writes,[57]
Which pricks down its little sharp sentences spitefully
As if you got more than you'd title to rightfully,
And you find yourself hoping its wild father Lightning
Would flame in for a second and give you a fright'ning.
He has perfect sway of what *I* call a sham meter,
But many admire it, the English pentameter,
And Campbell, I think, wrote most commonly worse,
With less nerve, swing, and fire in the same kind of verse,
Nor e'er achieved aught in't so worthy of praise
As the tribute of Holmes to the grand *Marseillaise*.[58]
You went crazy last year over Bulwer's New Timon;—[59]
Why, if B. to the day of his dying, should rime on,
Heaping verses on verses and tomes upon tomes,
He could ne'er reach the best point and vigor of Holmes.
His are just the fine hands, too, to weave you a lyric
Full of fancy, fun, feeling, or spiced with satyric
In a measure so kindly, you doubt if the toes
That are trodden upon are your own or your foes'.

"There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus[60] to climb
With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with rime,
He might get on alone, spite of brambles and boulders,
But he can't with that bundle he has on his shoulders,
The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh reaching
Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing and preaching;
His lyre has some chords that would ring pretty well,
But he'd rather by half make a drum of the shell,
And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,
At the head of a march to the last new Jerusalem."

. . . .

1848 1848

BEAVER BROOK[1]

Hushed with broad sunlight lies the hill,
And, minuting[2] the long day's loss,
The cedar's shadow, slow and still,
Creeps o'er its dial of gray moss.

Warm noon brims full the valley's cup,
The aspen's leaves are scarce astir,
Only the little mill sends up
Its busy, never-ceasing burr.

Climbing the loose-piled wall that hems
The road along the mill-pond's brink,
From 'neath the arching barberry-stems,
My footstep scares the shy chewink.

Beneath a bony buttonwood
The mill's red door lets forth the din;
The whitened miller, dust-imbued,
Flits past the square of dark within.

No mountain torrent's strength is here;
Sweet Beaver, child of forest still,
Heaps its small pitcher to the ear,
And gently waits the miller's will.

Swift slips Undine[3] along the race
Unheard, and then, with flashing bound,
Floods the dull wheel with light and grace,
And, laughing, hunts the loath drudge round.

The miller dreams not at what cost
The quivering mill-stones hum and whirl,
Nor how for every turn, are tost
Armfuls of diamond and of pearl.

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[57] The first telegraph line was set up between Washington and Baltimore in 1844. In primitive instruments messages were pricked upon moving strips of paper.

[58] In *A Metrical Essay*. Read before the Phi Beta Kappa Society, Harvard, 1836.

[59] A satire published by Bulwer Lytton in 1846.

[60] See note 27, p. 691.

[1] Originally called *The Mill*. "The little mill stands in a valley between one of the spurs of Wellington Hill and the main summit, just on the edge of Waltham. It is surely one of the loveliest spots in the world. It is one of my lions, and if you will make me a visit this spring I will take you up to hear it roar . . . " *Letters of James Russell Lowell*, i. 149.

[2] measuring by minutes

[3] The water spirit in *Undine* (1811) by Fouqué, Baron de la Motte.

But summer cleared my happier eyes
With drops of some celestial juice,
To see how Beauty underlies
For evermore each form of Use.

And more; methought I saw that flood,
Which now so dull and darkling steals,
Thick, here and there, with human blood,
To turn the world's laborious wheels.

No more than doth the miller there,
Shut in our several cells, do we
Know with what waste of beauty rare
Moves every day's machinery.

Surely the wiser time shall come
When this fine overplus of might,
No longer sullen, slow, and dumb,
Shall leap to music and to light.

In that new childhood of the Earth
Life of itself shall dance and play,
Fresh blood in Time's shrunk veins make mirth,
And labor meet delight half-way.
1848 1848

THE FIRST SNOW-FALL[1]

The snow had begun in the gloaming,
And busily all the night
Had been heaping field and highway
With a silence deep and white.

Every pine and fir and hemlock
Wore ermine too dear for an earl,
And the poorest twig on the elm-tree
Was ridged inch deep with pearl.

From sheds new-roofed with Carrara[2]
Came Chanticleer's muffled crow,
The stiff rails were softened to swan's-down
And still fluttered down the snow.

I stood and watched by the window
The noiseless work of the sky,
And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn
Where a little headstone stood;
How the flakes were folding it gently,
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,
Saying, "Father, who makes it snow?"
And I told of the good All-father
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,
And thought of the leaden sky
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience
That fell from that cloud like snow,
Flake by flake, healing and hiding
The scar that renewed our woe.

And again to the child I whispered,
"The snow that husheth all,
Darling, the merciful Father
Alone can make it fall!"

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her;
And she, kissing back, could not know
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,
Folded close under deepening snow.
1849 1849

SHE CAME AND WENT

As a twig trembles, which a bird
Lights on to sing, then leaves unbent,
So is my memory thrilled and stirred;—
I only know she came and went.

As clasps some lake, by gusts unriven,
The blue dome's measureless content,
So my soul held that moment's heaven;—
I only know she came and went.

As, at one bound, our swift spring heaps
The orchards full of bloom and scent,
So clove her May my wintry sleeps;—
I only know she came and went.

An angel stood and met my gaze,
Through the low doorway of my tent;
The tent is struck, the vision stays;—
I only know she came and went.

Oh, when the room grows slowly dim,
And life's last oil is nearly spent,
One gush of light these eyes will brim,
Only to think she came and went.
1847? 1849

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[1] In memory of Lowell's first child, Blanche, who had died in 1847 when but fourteen months old. She was buried in Mt. Auburn cemetery, Cambridge, very near Lowell's home.

[2] A very beautiful white Italian marble quarried at Carrara.

AUF WIEDERSEHEN[1]

SUMMER

The little gate was reached at last,
Half hid in lilacs down the lane;
She pushed it wide, and, as she past,
A wistful look she backward cast,
And said,—*"Auf wiedersehen!"*

With hand on latch, a vision white
Lingered reluctant, and again
Half doubting if she did aright,
Soft as the dews that fell that night,
She said,—*"Auf wiedersehen!"*

The lamp's clear gleam flits up the stair;
I linger in delicious pain;
Ah, in that chamber, whose rich air
To breathe in thought I scarcely dare,
Thinks she,—*"Auf wiedersehen!"*

'Tis thirteen years; once more I press
The turf that silences the lane;
I hear the rustle of her dress,
I smell the lilacs, and—ah, yes,
I hear,—*"Auf wiedersehen!"*

Sweet piece of bashful maiden art!
The English words had seemed too fain,
But these—they drew us heart to heart,
Yet held us tenderly apart;
She said,—*"Auf wiedersehen!"*

1854 1854

DAS EWIG-WEIBLICHE[2]

How was I worthy so divine a loss,
Deepening my midnights, kindling all my morns?
Why waste such precious wood to make my cross,
Such far-sought roses for my crown of thorns?

And when she came, how earned I such a gift?
Why spend on me, a poor earth-delving mole,
The fireside sweetnesses, the heavenward lift,
The hourly mercy, of a woman's soul?

Ah, did we know to give her all her right,
What wonders even in our poor clay were done!
It is not Woman leaves us to our night,
But our brute earth that grovels from her sun.

Our nobler cultured fields and gracious domes
We whirl too oft from her who still shines on
To light in vain our caves and clefts, the homes
Of night-bird instincts pained till she be gone.

Still must this body starve our souls with shade;
But when Death makes us what we were before,
Then shall her sunshine all our depths invade,
And not a shadow stain heaven's crystal floor.

1858 1858

From THE BIGLOW PAPERS[1]

[*First Series, 1846-1848*]

No. I

A LETTER

FROM MR. EZEKIEL BIGLOW OF JAALAM TO THE HON. JOSEPH T. BUCKINGHAM, EDITOR OF THE BOSTON COURIER, ENCLOSING A POEM OF HIS SON, MR. HOSEA BIGLOW.

JAYLEM, june 1846.

MISTER EDDYTER:—Our Hosea wuz down to Boston last week, and he see a cruetin Sarjunt a struttin round as popler as a hen with 1 chicking, with 2 fellers a drummin and fifin arter him like all nater. the sarjunt he thout Hosea hedn't gut his i teeth cut cos he looked a kindo's though he'd jest com down, so he cal'lated to hook him in, but Hosy woodn't take none o' his sarse for all he hed much as 20 Rooster's tales stuck onto his hat and eenamost enuf brass a bobbin up and down on his shoulders and figureed onto his coat and trousis, let alone wut nater hed sot in his featers, to make a 6 pounder out on.

wal, Hosea he com home considerabal

---

[1] May we meet again.

[2] The eternally feminine. Lowell's first wife, Maria White, had died five years before.

[1] In these satires, which came out at intervals—the first series during the Mexican War, and the second series during the Civil War—Lowell, often with stinging force, puts into the mouth of the Yankee farmer the ideas current in New England at the time. Many believed that the Mexican War was begun with a view to increasing slave territory. At its close Mexico yielded to the United States much of what is now California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming. H. W. or Homerus Wilbur, Esq., a pedantic minister, purports to edit the poems of his parishioner, Hosea Biglow.

riled, and arter I'd gone to bed I heern Him a thrashin round like a short-tailed Bull in fli-time. The old Woman ses she to me ses she, Zekle, ses she, our Hosee's gut the chollery or suthin anuther ses she, don't you Bee skeered, ses I, he's oney amakin pottery [*Aut insanit, aut versos facit.*—H. W.[2]] ses i, he's ollers on hand at that ere busynes like Da & martin,[3] and shure enuf, cum mornin, Hosy he cum down stares full chizzle, hare on eend and cote tales flyin, and sot rite of to go reed his varses to Parson Wilbur bein he haint aney grate shows o' book larnin himself, bimeby he cum back and sed the parson wuz dreffle tickled with 'em as i hoop you will Be, and said they wuz True grit.

Hosea ses taint hardly fair to call 'em hisn now, cos the parson kind o' slicked off sum o' the last varses, but he told Hosee he didn't want to put his ore in to tetch to the Rest on 'em, bein they wuz verry well As thay wuz, and then Hosy ses he sed suthin a nuther about Simplex Mundishes[4] or sum sech feller, but I guess Hosea kind o' didn't hear him, for I never hearn o' nobody o' that name in this villadge, and I've lived here man and boy 76 year cum next tater diggin, and thair aint no wheres a kitting spryer'n I be.

If you print 'em I wish you'd jest let folks know who hosy's father is, cos my ant Keziah used to say it's nater to be curus ses she, she aint livin though and he's a likely kind o' lad.

Ezekiel Biglow.

Thrash away, you'll *hev* to rattle
On them kittle-drums o' yourn,—
'Taint a knowin' kind o' cattle
Thet is ketched with moldy corn;
Put in stiff, you fifer feller,
Let folks see how spry you be,—
Guess you'll toot till you are yeller
'Fore you git ahold o' me!

Thet air flag's a leetle rotten,
Hope it aint your Sunday's best;—
Fact! it takes a sight o' cotton
To stuff out a soger's chest:
Sence we farmers hev to pay fer't,
Ef you must wear humps like these,
Sposin' you should try salt hay fer't,
It would du ez slick ez grease.

'Twouldn't suit them Southun fellers,
They're a dreffle graspin' set,
We must ollers blow the bellers
Wen they want their irons het;
May be it's all right ez preachin',
But *my* narves it kind o' grates,
Wen I see the overreachin'
O' them nigger-drivin' States.

Them thet rule us, them slave-traders,
Haint they cut a thunderin' swarth,
(Helped by Yankee renegaders,)
Thru the vartu o' the North!
We begin to think it's nater
To take sarse an' not be riled;—
Who'd expect to see a tater
All on eend at bein' biled?

Ez fer war, I call it murder,—
There you hev it plain an' flat;
I don't want to go no furder
Than my Testyment fer that;
God hez sed so plump an' fairly,
It's ez long ez it is broad,
An' you've gut to git up airly
Ef you want to take in God.

'Taint your eppyletts an' feathers
Make the thing a grain more right;
'Taint afollerin' your bell-wethers
Will excuse ye in His sight;
Ef you take a sword an' dror it,
An' go stick a feller thru,
Guv'ment aint to answer for it,
God'll send the bill to you.

Wut's the use o' meetin'-goin'
Every Sabbath, wet or dry,
Ef it's right to go amowin'
Feller-men like oats an' rye?
I dunno but wut it's pooty
Trainin' round in bobtail coats,—
But it's curus Christian dooty
This 'ere cuttin' folks's throats.

They may talk o' Freedom's airy[5]
Tell they're pupple in the face,—
It's a grand gret cemetary
Fer the barthrights of our race;
They jest want this Californy
So's to lug new slave-states in
To abuse ye, an' to scorn ye,
An' to plunder ye like sin.

Aint it cute to see a Yankee
Take sech everlastin' pains,
All to git the Devil's thankee,
Helpin' on 'em weld their chains?

[2] "Either he raves or he composes verses." Horace, *Satires*, II. vii. 117.

[3] Messrs. Day and Martin's shoe blacking came in earthen (pottery) jars.

[4] *Simplex munditiis.* "Plain in thy neatness." Horace, *Carmina*, I. v. 5.

[5] area; or possibly *eyrie* (*eagle-nest*)

Wy, it's jest ez clear ez figgers,
Clear ez one an' one make two,
Chaps thet make black slaves o' niggers
Want to make wite slaves o' you.

Tell ye jest the eend I've come to
Arter cipherin' plaguy smart,
An' it makes a handy sum, tu,
Any gump could larn by heart;
Laborin' man an' laborin' woman
Hev one glory an' one shame,
Ev'y thin' thet's done inhuman
Injers all on 'em the same.

'Taint by turnin' out to hack folks
You're agoin' to git your right,
Nor by lookin' down on black folks
Coz you're put upon by wite;
Slavery aint o' nary color,
'Taint the hide thet makes it wus,
All it keers fer in a feller
'S jest to make him fill its pus.

Want to tackle *me* in, du ye?
I expect you'll hev to wait;
Wen cold lead puts daylight thru ye
You'll begin to kal'late;
'Spose the crows wun't fall to pickin'
All the carkiss from your bones,
Coz you helped to give a lickin'
To them poor half-Spanish drones?

Jest go home an' ask our Nancy
Wether I'd be sech a goose
Ez to jine ye,—guess you'd fancy
The etarnal bung was loose!
She wants me fer home consumption,
Let alone the hay's to mow,—
Ef you're arter folks o' gumption,
You've a darned long row to hoe.

Take them editors thet's crowin'
Like a cockerel three months old,—
Don't ketch any on 'em goin',
Though they *be* so blasted bold;
Aint they a prime lot o' fellers?
'Fore they think on't guess they'll sprout,
(Like a peach thet's got the yellers)
With the meanness bustin' out.

Wal, go 'long to help 'em stealin'
Bigger pens to cram with slaves,
Help the men thet's ollers dealin'
Insults on your fathers' graves;
Help the strong to grind the feeble,
Help the many agin the few,
Help the men thet call your people
Witewashed slaves an' peddlin' crew!

Massachusetts, God forgive her,
She's akneeling with the rest,
She thet ough' to ha' clung ferever
In her grand old eagle-nest;
She thet ough' to stand so fearless
Wile the wracks are round her hurled,
Holdin' up a beacon peerless
To the oppressed of all the world!

Ha'n't they sold your colored seamen?
Ha'n't they made your env'ys w'iz?[6]
Wut'll make ye act like free men?
Wut'll git your dander riz?
Come, I'll tell ye wut I'm thinkin'
Is our dooty in this fix,
They'd ha' done 't ez quick ez winkin'
In the days o' seventy-six.

Clang the bells in every steeple,
Call all true men to disown
The tradoocers of our people,
The enslavers o' their own;
Let our dear old Bay State proudly
Put the trumpet to her mouth,
Let her ring this messidge loudly
In the ears of all the South:—

"I'll return ye good for evil
Much ez we frail mortils can,
But I won't go help the Devil
Makin' man the cus o' man;
Call me coward, call me traiter,
Jest ez suits your mean idees,—
Here I stand a tyrant-hater,
An' the friend o' God an' Peace!"

Ef I'd *my* way I hed ruther
We should go to work an' part,—[7]
They take one way, we take t'other,—
Guess it wouldn't break my heart;
Man hed ough' to put asunder
Them thet God has noways jined;
An' I shouldn't gretly wonder
Ef there's thousands o' my mind.

[The first recruiting sergeant on record I conceive to have been that individual who is mentioned in the Book of Job as *going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it.* Bishop Latimer will have him to have been a bishop, but to me that other calling would appear more congenial. The sect of Cainites is not yet extinct, who esteemed the first-born of Adam to be the most worthy, not only because of that privilege of primogeniture, but inasmuch as he was able to overcome and slay his younger brother. That was a wise saying of the famous Marquis Pescara to the Papal Legate, that *it was impossible for men to serve Mars and Christ at the same time.* Yet in time past the profession of arms was judged to be κατ ἐξοχήν that of a gentleman, nor does this opinion want for strenuous upholders even in our day. Must we suppose, then, that the profession of Christianity was only intended for losels, or, at best, to afford an opening for plebeian ambition? Or shall we hold with that nicely metaphysical Pomeranian, Captain Vratz, who was Count Königsmark's chief instrument in the murder of Mr. Thynne, that the Scheme of Salvation had been arranged with an especial eye to the necessities of the upper classes, and that "God would consider *a gentleman* and deal with him suitably to the condition and profession he had placed him in"? It may be said of us all, *Exemplo plus quam ratione vivimus.*—H. W.]

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[6] Several southern states had laws forbidding colored freemen to enter their territory. Black sailors had been imprisoned and even sold as slaves in some southern ports. Mr. Samuel Hoar of Massachusetts, who had been sent to Charleston in the interests of black sailors, was expelled from South Carolina, and Mr. Hubbard, who had been sent to New Orleans, was made to leave Louisiana.

[7] The idea of secession was not confined to the south.

[*Second Series, 1862-1866*]

The Courtin'

God makes sech nights, all white an' still
Fur'z you can look or listen,
Moonshine an' snow on field an' hill,
All silence an' all glisten.

Zekle crep' up quite unbeknown
An' peeked in thru' the winder,
An' there sot Huldy all alone,
'ith no one nigh to hender.

A fireplace filled the room's one side
With half a cord o' wood in—
There warn't no stoves (tell comfort died)
To bake ye to a puddin'.

The wa'nut logs shot sparkles out
Towards the pootiest, bless her,
An' leetle flames danced all about
The chiny on the dresser.

Agin the chimbley crook-necks[1] hung,
An' in amongst 'em rusted
The ole queen's-arm[2] thet gran'ther Young
Fetched back f'om Concord busted.

The very room, coz she was in,
Seemed warm from floor to ceilin',
An' she looked full ez rosy agin
Ez the apples she was peelin'.

'Twas kin' o' kingdom-come to look
On sech a blessed cretur,
A dogrose blushin' to a brook
Ain't modester nor sweeter.

He was six foot o' man, A 1,
Clear grit an' human natur';
None couldn't quicker pitch a ton
Nor dror a furrer straighter.

He'd sparked it with full twenty gals,
He'd squired 'em, danced 'em, druv 'em,
Fust this one, an' then thet, by spells—
All is, he couldn't love 'em.

But long o' her his veins 'ould run
All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she breshed felt full o' sun
Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

She thought no v'ice hed sech a swing
Ez hisn in the choir;
My! when he made Ole Hunderd ring,
She *knowed* the Lord was nigher.

An' she'd blush scarlit, right in prayer,
When her new meetin'-bunnet
Felt somehow thru' its crown a pair
O' blue eyes sot upun it.

Thet night, I tell ye, she looked *some!*
She seemed to 've gut a new soul,
For she felt sartin-sure he'd come,
Down to her very shoe-sole.

She heered a foot, an' knowed it tu,
A-raspin' on the scraper,—
All ways to once her feelin's flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

He kin' o' l'itered on the mat
Some doubtfle o' the sekle,
His heart kep' goin' pity-pat,
But hern went pity Zekle.

An' yit she gin her cheer a jerk
Ez though she wished him furder,
An' on her apples kep' to work,
Parin' away like murder.

"You want to see my Pa, I s'pose?"
"Wal . . . no . . . I come dasignin'"—
"To see my Ma? She's sprinklin' clo'es
Agin to-morrer's i'nin'."

---

[1] squashes

[2] musket

To say why gals acts so or so,
Or don't, 'ould be presumin';
Mebby to mean *yes* an' say *no*
Comes nateral to women.

He stood a spell on one foot fust,
Then stood a spell on t'other,
An' on which one he felt the wust
He couldn't ha' told ye nuther.

Says he, "I'd better call agin";
Says she, "Think likely, Mister":
Thet last word pricked him like a pin,
An' . . . Wal, he up an' kist her.

When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
An' teary roun' the lashes.

For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
Snowhid in Jenooary.

The blood clost roun' her heart felt glued
Too tight for all expressin',
Tell mother see how metters stood,
And gin 'em both her blessin'.

Then her red come back like the tide
Down to the Bay o' Fundy,
An' all I know is they was cried[3]
In meetin' come nex' Sunday.

THE WASHERS OF THE SHROUD[1]

Along a river-side, I know not where,
I walked one night in mystery of dream;
A chill creeps curdling yet beneath my hair,
To think what chanced me by the pallid gleam
Of a moon-wraith that waned through haunted air.

Pale fireflies pulsed within the meadow-mist
Their halos, wavering thistle-downs of light;
The loon, that seemed to mock some goblin tryst,
Laughed; and the echoes, huddling in affright,
Like Odin's hounds, fled baying down the night.

Then all was silent, till there smote my ear
A movement in the stream that checked my breath:
Was it the slow plash of a wading deer?
But something said, "This water is of Death!
The Sisters[2] wash a shroud,—ill thing to hear!"

I, looking then, beheld the ancient Three
Known to the Greeks and to the Norseman's creed,
That sit in shadow of the mystic Tree,
Still crooning, as they weave their endless brede,[3]
One song: "Time was, Time is, and Time shall be."

No wrinkled crones were they, as I had deemed,
But fair as yesterday, today, tomorrow,
To mourner, lover, poet, ever seemed:
Something too deep for joy, too high for sorrow,
Thrilled in their tones, and from their faces gleamed.

"Still men and nations reap as they have strawn,"
So sang they, working at their task the while,—
"The fatal raiment must be cleansed ere dawn:
For Austria? Italy? The Sea-Queen's isle?
O'er what quenched grandeur must our shroud be drawn?

"Or is it for a younger, fairer corse,
That gathered States like children round his knees,
That tamed the wave to be his posting-horse,
Feller of forests, linker of the seas,
Bridge-builder, hammerer, youngest son of Thor's?

---

[3] The marriage bans were published.

[1] From the date of the poem and its imagery it is evident that Lowell greatly feared the breaking up of the Union. In a letter to Charles Eliot Norton he wrote: "the hint came to me from one of those books of Souvestre's you lent me—the Breton legends." *Letters of James Russell Lowell,* i. 317.

[2] The Three Sisters or Fates. In classic mythology Clotho spun the thread of life, Lachesis measured it, and Atropos cut it. In Norse mythology the three Fates or Norns are Udur, Verdandi, and Skuld. They sit tending that root of the ash tree Yggdrasil, the supporter of the universe, which penetrates Asgard, the home of the gods.

[3] braid

"What make we, murmur'st thou? and what are we?
When empires must be wound, we bring the shroud,
The time-old web of the implacable Three:
Is it too coarse for him, the young and proud?
Earth's mightiest deigned to wear it,—why not he?"

"Is there no hope?" I moaned, "so strong, so fair!
Our Fowler whose proud bird would brook erewhile
No rival's swoop in all our western air![4]
Gather the ravens, then, in funeral file
For him, life's morn yet golden in his hair?

"Leave me not hopeless, ye unpitying dames!
I see, half seeing: tell me, ye who scanned
The stars, Earth's elders, still must noblest aims
Be traced upon oblivious ocean-sands?
Must Hesper[5] join the wailing ghosts of names?"

"When grass-blades stiffen with red battle-dew,
Ye deem we choose the victor and the slain:
Say, choose we them that shall be leal and true
To the heart's longing, the high faith of brain?
Yet there the victory lies, if ye but knew.

"Three roots bear up Dominion: Knowledge, Will,—
These twain are strong, but stronger yet the third,
Obedience,—'tis the great tap-root that still,
Knit round the rock of Duty, is not stirred,
Though Heaven-loosed tempests spend their utmost skill.

"Is the doom sealed for Hesper? 'Tis not we
Denounce it, but the Law before all time:
The brave makes danger opportunity,
The waverer, paltering with the chance sublime,
Dwarfs it to peril: which shall Hesper be?

"Hath he let vultures climb his eagle's seat
To make Jove's bolts purveyors of their maw?
Hath he the Many's plaudits found more sweet
Than Wisdom? held Opinion's wind for law?
Then let him hearken for the doomster's feet!

"Rough are the steps, slow-hewn in flintiest rock,
States climb to power by; slippery those with gold
Down which they stumble to eternal mock:
No chafferer's hand shall long the scepter hold,
Who, given a Fate to shape, would sell the block.

"We sing old sagas, songs of weal and woe,
Mystic because too cheaply understood;
Dark sayings are not ours: men hear and know,
See Evil weak, see strength alone in Good,
Yet hope to stem God's fire with walls of tow.

"Time Was unlocks the riddle of Time Is,
That offers choice of glory or of gloom;
The solver makes Time Shall Be surely his.
But hasten, Sisters! for even now the tomb
Grates its slow hinge and calls from the abyss."

"But not for him," I cried, "not yet for him,
Whose large horizon, westering, star by star
Wins from the void to where on ocean's rim
The sunset shuts the world with golden bar,—
Not yet his thews shall fail, his eye grow dim!

"His shall be larger manhood, saved for those
That walk unblenching through the trial-fires;
Not suffering, but faint heart, is worst of woes,

---

[4] France and Spain had now withdrawn from the United States. The "Monroe Doctrine" also declared that the American continents must not be considered as subjects for future colonization by European nations.

[5] Hesperus, son of Eos, Dawn, is the evening (and so the western) star; it was regarded by the ancients as also the morning star—the bringer of light.

And he no base-born son of craven sires,
Whose eye need blench confronted with his foes.

"Tears may be ours, but proud, for those who win
Death's royal purple in the foeman's lines;
Peace, too, brings tears; and mid the battle-din,
The wiser ear some text of God divines;
For the sheathed blade may rust with darker sin.

"God, give us peace! not such as lulls to sleep,
But sword on thigh, and brow with purpose knit!
And let our Ship of State to harbor sweep,
Her ports all up, her battle-lanterns lit,
And her leashed thunders gathering for their leap!"

So said I with clenched hands and passionate pain,
Thinking of dear ones by Potomac's side;
Again the loon laughed mocking, and again
The echoes bayed far down the night and died,
While, waking, I recalled my wandering brain.

1861 1861

ODE RECITED AT THE HARVARD COMMEMORATION[1]

I

Weak-wingèd is song,
Nor aims at that clear-ethered height
Whither the brave deed climbs for light:
We seem to do them wrong,
Bringing our robin's-leaf to deck their hearse
Who in warm life-blood wrote their nobler verse,
Our trivial song to honor those who come
With ears attuned to strenuous trump and drum,
And shaped in squadron-strophes[2] their desire,
Live battle-odes whose lines were steel and fire.
Yet sometimes feathered words are strong
A gracious memory to buoy up and save
From Lethe's[3] dreamless ooze, the common grave
Of the unventurous throng.

II

Today our Reverend Mother welcomes back
Her wisest Scholars, those who understood
The deeper teaching of her mystic tome
And offered their fresh lives to make it good.
No lore of Greece or Rome,
No science peddling with the names of things,
Or reading stars to find inglorious fates,
Can lift our life with wings
Far from Death's idle gulf that for the many waits,
And lengthen out our dates
With that clear fame whose memory sings
In manly hearts to come, and nerves them and dilates:
Nor such thy teaching, Mother of us all!
Not such the trumpet-call
Of thy diviner mood,
That could thy sons entice
From happy homes and toils, the fruitful nest
Of those half-virtues which the world calls best,
Into War's tumult rude;
But rather far that stern device
The sponsors chose that round thy cradle stood
In the dim, unventured wood,
The VERITAS[4] that lurks beneath
The letter's unprolific sheath,
Life of whate'er makes life worth living,
Seed-grain of high emprise, immortal food,
One heavenly thing whereof earth hath the giving.

III

Many loved Truth, and lavished life's best oil
Amid the dust of books to find her,

---

[1] The *Ode* was read at Harvard College on July 21, 1865, at a solemn commemoration held in memory of the sons of the College who had fallen during the Civil War.

[2] The strophe, or turn, was a division of the Greek choral ode, sung by one part of the Greek chorus; the response or anti-strophe was sung by the other part of the chorus.

[3] The river of oblivion in Hades.

[4] *Veritas* (L. truth) is the motto upon the seal of Harvard University.

Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
With the cast mantle she hath left behind her;[5]
Many in sad faith sought for her,
Many with crossed hands sighed for her.
But these, our brothers, fought for her,
At life's dear peril wrought for her,
So loved her that they died for her,
Tasting the raptured fleetness
Of her divine completeness:
Their higher instinct knew
Those love her best who to themselves are true,
And what they dare to dream of dare to do:
They followed her and found her
Where all may hope to find,
Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,
But beautiful, with danger's sweetness round her:
Where faith, made whole with deed,
Breathes its awakening breath
Into the lifeless creed,
They saw her, plumed and mailed,
With sweet, stern face unveiled,
And all-repaying eyes, look proud on them in death.

IV

Our slender life runs rippling by, and glides
Into the silent hollow of the past;
What is there that abides
To make the next age better for the last?
Is earth too poor to give us
Something to live for here that shall outlive us?
Some more substantial boon
Than such as flows and ebbs with Fortune's fickle moon?
The little that we see
From doubt is never free;[6]
The little that we do
Is but half-nobly true;
With our laborious hiving
What men call treasure, and the gods call dross,
Life seems a jest of Fate's contriving,
Only secure in every one's conniving,
A long account of nothings paid with loss,
Where we poor puppets, jerked by unseen wires,
After our little hour of strut and rave,[7]
With all our pasteboard passions and desires,
Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal fires,
Are tossed pell-mell together in the grave.
Ah, there is something here
Unfathomed by the cynic's sneer;
Something that gives our feeble light
A high immunity from Night;
Something that leaps life's narrow bars
To claim its birthright with the hosts of heaven:[8]
A seed of sunshine that doth leaven
Our earthly dulness with the beams of stars,
And glorify our clay
With light from fountains elder than the Day;
A conscience more divine than we,
A gladness fed with secret tears,
A vexing, forward-reaching sense
Of some more noble permanence ;
A light across the sea,
Which haunts the soul and will not let it be,
Still glimmering from the heights of undegenerate years.

V

Whither leads the path
To ampler fates that leads?
Not down through flowery meads,
To reap an aftermath
Of youth's vainglorious weeds;
But up the steep, amid the wrath
And shock of deadly-hostile creeds,
Where the world's best hope and stay
By battle's flashes gropes a desperate way,
And every turf the fierce foot clings to bleeds.
Peace hath her not ignoble wreath,
Ere yet the sharp, decisive word
Lights the black lips of cannon, and the sword
Dreams in its easeful sheath:
But some day the live coal behind the thought,

---

[5] Knowledge of the past.

[6] Cf. Browning in *Bishop Blougram's Apology:*

> "All we have gained then by our unbelief
> Is a life of doubt diversified by faith,
> For one of faith diversified by doubt:
> We called the chess-board white,—we call it black."

[7] Cf. *Macbeth* V. v. 25.

[8] Cf. Wordsworth's *Ode, Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Childhood,* IX.

Whether from Baäl's[9] stone obscene,
Or from the shrine serene
Of God's pure altar brought,
Bursts up in flame; the war of tongue and pen
Learns with what deadly purpose it was fraught,
And, helpless in the fiery passion caught,
Shakes all the pillared state with shock of men.
Some day the soft Ideal that we wooed
Confronts us fiercely, foe-beset, pursued,
And cries reproachful: "Was it, then, my praise,
And not myself was loved? Prove now thy truth!
I claim of thee the promise of thy youth;
Give me thy life, or cower in empty phrase,
The victim of thy genius, not its mate!"
Life may be given in many ways,
And loyalty to Truth be sealed
As bravely in the closet as the field,
So generous is Fate;
But then to stand beside her,
When craven churls deride her,
To front a lie in arms and not to yield,
This shows, methinks, God's plan
And measure of a stalwart man,
Limbed like the old heroic breeds,
Who stands self-poised on manhood's solid earth,
Not forced to frame excuses for his birth,
Fed from within with all the strength he needs.

VI

Such was he, our Martyr-Chief,[10]
Whom late the Nation he had led,
With ashes on her head,
Wept with the passion of an angry grief:
Forgive me, if from present things I turn
To speak what in my heart will beat and burn,
And hang my wreath on his world-honored urn.
Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:
For him her Old-World mold aside she threw,
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed,
Who loved his charge but never loved to lead;
One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,
Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!
They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.
Nothing of Europe here—
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,
Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature's equal scheme deface:
Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men[11] talked with us face to face.
I praise him not: it were too late;
And some innative weakness there must be
In him who condescends to victory
Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,
Safe in himself as in a fate.
So always firmly he:
He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide.
Great captains, with their guns and drums,
Disturb our judgment for the hour,
But at last silence comes;
These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.

---

[9] A Canaanitish deity, god of abundance and fertility. His worship was attended with wild orgies, and was introduced among the Israelites during the time of the kings.

[10] Abraham Lincoln, assassinated April 15, 1865.

[11] Plutarch, a Greek historian of the first century, wrote the lives of forty-six of the most famous Greeks and Romans.

VII

Long as man's hope insatiate can discern
Or only guess some more inspiring goal
Outside of Self, enduring as the pole,
Along whose course the flying axles burn
Of spirits bravely-pitched, earth's manlier brood;
Long as below we cannot find
The meed that stills the inexorable mind;
So long this faith to some ideal Good,
Under whatever mortal names it masks—
Freedom, Law, Country,—this ethereal mood
That thanks the Fates for their severer tasks,
Feeling its challenged pulses leap
While others skulk in subterfuges cheap,
And, set in Danger's van, has all the boon it asks,
Shall win man's praise and woman's love,
Shall be a wisdom that we set above
All other skills and gifts to culture dear,
A virtue round whose forehead we enwreathe
Laurels that with a living passion breathe
When other crowns are cold and soon grow sear.
What brings us thronging these high rites to pay,
And seal these hours the noblest of our year,
Save that our brothers found this better way?

VIII

We sit here in the Promised Land[12]
That flows with Freedom's honey and milk;
But 't was they won it, sword in hand,
Making the nettle danger[13] soft for us as silk.
We welcome back our bravest and our best—
Ah me! not all! some come not with the rest,
Who went forth brave and bright as any here!
I strive to mix some gladness with my strain,
But the sad strings complain,
And will not please the ear:
I sweep them for a pæan,[14] but they wane
Again and yet again
Into a dirge and die away in pain.
In these brave ranks I only see the gaps,
Thinking of dear ones whom the dumb turf wraps,
Dark to the triumph which they died to gain:
Fitlier may others greet the living,
For me the past is unforgiving;
I with uncovered head
Salute the sacred dead,
Who went, and who return not.—Say not so!
'T is not the grapes of Canaan[15] that repay,
But the high faith that failed not by the way;
Virtue treads paths that end not in the grave;
No ban of endless night exiles the brave;
And to the saner mind
We rather seem the dead that stayed behind.
Blow, trumpets, all your exultations blow!
For never shall their aureoled presence lack:
I see them muster in a gleaming row,
With ever-youthful brows that nobler show;
We find in our dull road their shining track;
In every nobler mood
We feel the orient of their spirit glow,
Part of our life's unalterable good,
Of all our saintlier aspiration;
They come transfigured back,
Secure from change in their high-hearted ways,
Beautiful evermore, and with the rays
Of morn on their white Shields of Expectation!

IX

Who now shall sneer?
Who dare again to say we trace
Our lines to a plebeian race?
Roundhead and Cavalier![16]
Dreams are those names erewhile in battle loud;
Forceless as is the shadow of a cloud,
They live but in the ear:

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[12] Cf. the land of Canaan promised to the Israelites. *Exodus* iii. 8.

[13] "Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety." Shakspere, 1 *Henry* IV, II, iii.

[14] song of triumph

[15] See *Numbers* xiii, 17, ff.

[16] The Roundheads, or Puritans, and Cavaliers, or monarchists, were the two parties in the Puritan Revolution, 1642-1646, in England.

That is best blood that hath most iron in 't
To edge resolve with, pouring without stint
For what makes manhood dear.
Tell us not of Plantagenets,
Hapsburgs, and Guelfs,[17] whose thin bloods crawl
Down from some victor in a border-brawl!
How poor their outworn coronets,
Matched with one leaf of that plain civic wreath
Our brave for honor's blazon shall bequeath,
Through whose desert a rescued Nation sets
Her heel on treason, and the trumpet hears
Shout victory, tingling Europe's sullen ears
With vain resentments and more vain regrets!

X

Not in anger, not in pride,
Pure from passion's mixture rude
Ever to base earth allied,
But with far-heard gratitude,
Still with heart and voice renewed,
To heroes living and dear martyrs dead,
The strain should close that consecrates our brave.
Lift the heart and lift the head!
Lofty be its mood and grave,
Not without a martial ring,
Not without a prouder tread
And a peal of exultation:
Little right has he to sing
Through whose heart in such an hour
Beats no march of conscious power,
Sweeps no tumult of elation!
'T is no Man we celebrate,
By his country's victories great,
A hero half, and half the whim of Fate,
But the pith and marrow of a Nation
Drawing force from all her men,
Highest, humblest, weakest, all,
Pulsing it again through them,
Till the basest can no longer cower,
Feeling his soul spring up divinely tall,
Touched but in passing by her mantle-hem.
Come back, then, noble pride, for 't is her dower!
How could poet ever tower,
If his passions, hopes, and fears,
If his triumphs and his tears,
Kept not measure with his people?
Boom, cannon, boom to all the winds and waves!
Clash out, glad bells, from every rocking steeple!
Banners, advance with triumph, bend your staves!
And from every mountain-peak
Let beacon-fire to answering beacon speak,
Katahdin tell Monadnock, Whiteface[18] he,
And so leap on in light from sea to sea,
Till the glad news be sent
Across a kindling continent,
Making earth feel more firm and air breathe braver:
"Be proud! for she is saved, and all have helped to save her!
She that lifts up the manhood of the poor,
She of the open soul and open door,
With room about her hearth for all mankind!
The helm from her bold front she doth unbind,
Sends all her handmaid armies back to spin,
And bids her navies hold their thunders in.
No challenge sends she to the elder world,
That looked askance and hated; a light scorn
Plays on her mouth, as round her mighty knees
She calls her children back, and waits the morn
Of nobler day, enthroned between her subject seas."

XI

Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found release!
Thy God, in these distempered days,
Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His ways,
And through thine enemies hath wrought thy peace.
Bow down in prayer and praise!
O Beautiful! my Country! ours once more!

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[17] The Plantagenets were the rulers of England from 1154 to 1399; the Hapsburgs were sovereigns of the Holy Roman Empire, Austria, and Spain for many centuries, and still rule Austria; and the Guelphs were ancestors of the House of Hanover, the present ruling family in England.

[18] Mount Katahdin is the highest mountain in Maine; Monadnock and Whiteface are mountains in New Hampshire.

Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled
hair
O'er such sweet brows as never other
wore,
And letting thy set lips,
Freed from wrath's pale eclipse,
The rosy edges of their smile lay bare,
What words divine of lover or of poet
Could tell our love and make thee know
it,
Among the Nations bright beyond compare?
What were our lives without thee?
What all our lives to save thee;
We reck not what we gave thee;
We will not dare to doubt thee;
But ask whatever else, and we will dare!

1865 1865

AFTER THE BUR.

Yes, faith is a goodly anchor;[1]
When skies are sweet as a p.
At the bows it lolls so stalwart,
In its bluff, broad-shouldered ca

And when over breakers to leeward
The tattered surges are hurled,
It may keep our head to the tempest,
With its grip on the base of the world.

But, after the shipwreck, tell me
What help in its iron thews,
Still true to the broken hawser,
Deep down among sea-weed and ooze?

In the breaking gulfs of sorrow,
When the helpless feet stretch out
And find in the deeps of darkness
No footing so solid as doubt.

Then better one spar of Memory,
One broken plank of the Past,
That our human heart may cling to,
Though hopeless of shore at last!

To the spirit its splendid conjectures,
To the flesh its sweet despair,
Its tears o'er the thin-worn locket
With its anguish of deathless hair!

Immortal? I feel it and know it,
Who doubts it of such as she?
But that is the pang's very secret,—
Immortal away from me.

There's a narrow ridge in the graveyard
Would scarce stay a child in his race,
But to me and my thought it is wider
Than the star-sown vague of Space.

Your logic, my friend, is perfect,
Your moral most drearily true;
But, since the earth clashed on *her* coffin,
I keep hearing that, and not you.

Console if you will, I can bear it;
'T is a well-meant alms of breath;
But not all the preaching since Adam
Has made Death other than Death.

It is pagan; but wait till you feel it,—
That jar of our earth, that dull shock
When the plowshare of deeper passion
Tears down to our primitive rock.

Communion in spirit! Forgive me,
But I, who am earthly and weak,
Would give all my incomes from dreamland
For a touch of her hand on my cheek.

That little shoe in the corner,
So worn and wrinkled and brown,
With its emptiness confutes you,
And argues your wisdom down.

1868 1868

IN A COPY OF OMAR KHAYYAM[1]

These pearls of thought in Persian gulfs
were bred,
Each softly lucent as a rounded moon;
The diver Omar plucked them from their
bed,
Fitzgerald strung them on an English
thread.

Fit rosary for a queen, in shape and hue,
When Contemplation tells her pensive
beads
Of mortal thoughts, forever old and new.
Fit for a queen? Why, surely then for
you!

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[1] The first draft of the first six stanzas of *After the Burial* was written at the death of Lowell's second little infant, Rose, in 1850. Before the poem was finished he had lost a little son and his wife Maria White.

[1] *The Rubaiyat* (Quatrains) by Omar Khayyám, the Persian poet of the 11th and 12th centuries, is one of the world's great poems. It was best translated by Edward Fitzgerald in 1859.

The moral? Where Doubt's eddies toss and twirl
Faith's slender shallop till her footing reel,
Plunge: if you find not peace beneath the whirl,
Groping, you may like Omar grasp a pearl.
1888

"FRANCISCUS DE VERULAMIO SIC COGITAVIT"[1]

THAT'S a rather bold speech, my Lord Bacon,
For, indeed, is't so easy to know
Just how much we from others have taken,
And how much our own natural flow?

Since your mind bubbled up at its fountain,
How many streams made it elate,
While it calmed to the plain from the mountain,
As every mind must that grows great?

While you thought 't was You thinking as newly
As Adam still wet with God's dew,
You forgot in your self-pride that truly
The whole Past was thinking through you.

Greece, Rome, nay, your namesake, old Roger,[2]
With Truth's nameless delvers who wrought
In the dark mines of Truth, helped to prod your
Fine brain with the goad of their thought.

As mummy[3] was prized for a rich hue
The painter no elsewhere could find,
So 't was buried men's thinking with which you
Gave the ripe mellow tone to your mind.

I heard the proud strawberry saying,
"Only look what a ruby I've made!"
It forgot how the bees in their maying
Had brought it the stuff for its trade.

And yet there's the half of a truth in it,
And my Lord might his copyright sue;
For a thought's his who kindles new youth in it,
Or so puts it as makes it more true.

The birds but repeat without ending
The same old traditional notes,
Which some, by more happily blending,
Seem to make over new in their throats;

And we men through our old bit of song run,
Until one just improves on the rest,
And we call a thing his, in the long run,
Who utters it clearest and best.
1888

THOREAU[1]

What contemporary, if he was in the fighting period of his life, (since Nature sets limits about her conscription for spiritual fields, as the state does in physical warfare,) will ever forget what was somewhat vaguely called the "Transcendental Movement"[2] of thirty years ago? Apparently set astir by Carlyle's essays on the *Signs of the Times*, and on *History*, the final and more immediate impulse seemed to be given by *Sartor Resartus*.[3] At least the republication in Boston of that wonderful Abraham à Sancta-Clara[4] sermon on Lear's text of the miserable forked radish gave the signal for mental and moral mutiny: *Ecce nunc tempus acceptabile!*[5] was shouted on all hands with every variety of emphasis, and by voices of every conceivable pitch, representing the

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[1] The heading to the preface of Bacon's great philosophical work, the *Instauratio Magna*, is:

> *Franciscus de Verulamio sic cogitavit, talemque apud se rationem instituit; quam viventibus et posteris notam fieri, ipsorum interesse putavit.*
>
> [Francis Bacon thought as follows and reached conclusions such as these, which he thought when made known to the living and their descendants would be of concern to them.]

[2] Roger Bacon, 1214-1294, an English philosopher and scientist.

[3] An oil-painters' color that was made from asphalt taken from mummies.

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[1] This essay, one of Lowell's earliest critical essays, reveals a temperamental lack of sympathy with Thoreau. It must be remembered that Thoreau spent only two years at Walden, and went there partly to gain quiet for his literary work.

[2] The school of philosophy of which Emerson was the leading exponent.

[3] Literally, "The Tailor Re-clothed," Carlyle's spiritual autobiography, and one of his most original philosophical works, which, embodying as it does his spirit of revolt against existing conditions, was well fitted to act as a stimulus to Transcendentalism.

[4] The name assumed by Ulrich Megerle, 1644-1709, a popular Vienna court-preacher and satirist. See not *Lear* but 2 *Henry IV*. III. ii. 335

[5] Behold, now is the acceptable time. Cf. 2 *Corinthians*, vi. 2.

three sexes of men, women, and Lady Mary Wortley Montagus.[6] The nameless eagle of the tree Yggdrasil[7] was about to sit at last, and wild-eyed enthusiasts rushed from all sides, each eager to thrust under the mystic bird that chalk egg from which the new and fairer Creation was to be hatched in due time. *Redeunt Saturnia regna,*[8]—so far was certain, though in what shape, or by what methods, was still a matter of debate. Every possible form of intellectual and physical dyspepsia brought forth its gospel. Bran had its prophets, and the presartorial simplicity of Adam its martyrs, tailored impromptu from the tar-pot by incensed neighbors, and sent forth to illustrate the "feathered Mercury," as defined by Webster and Worcester. Plainness of speech was carried to a pitch that would have taken away the breath of George Fox;[9] and even swearing had its evangelists, who answered a simple inquiry after their health with an elaborate ingenuity of imprecation that might have been honorably mentioned by Marlborough[10] in general orders. Everybody had a mission (with a capital M) to attend to everybody-else's business. No brain but had its private maggot, which must have found pitiably short commons sometimes. Not a few impecunious zealots abjured the use of money (unless earned by other people), professing to live on the internal revenues of the spirit. Some had an assurance of instant millennium so soon as hooks and eyes should be substituted for buttons. Communities were established where everything was to be common but common sense. Men renounced their old gods, and hesitated only whether to bestow their furloughed allegiance on Thor or Budh.[11] Conventions were held for every hitherto inconceivable purpose. The belated gift of tongues, as among the Fifth Monarchy men,[12] spread like a contagion, rendering its victims incomprehensible to all Christian men; whether equally so to the most distant possible heathen or not, was unexperimented, though many would have subscribed liberally that a fair trial might be made. It was the pentecost of Shinar.[13] The day of utterances reproduced the day of rebuses and anagrams, and there was nothing so simple that uncial[14] letters and the style of Diphilus the Labyrinth[15] could not make into a riddle. Many foreign revolutionists out of work added to the general misunderstanding their contribution of broken English in every most ingenious form of fracture. All stood ready at a moment's notice to reform everything but themselves. The general motto was:

> And we'll *talk* with them, too,
> And take upon's the mystery of things
> As if we were God's spies.[16]

Nature is always kind enough to give even her clouds a humorous lining. I have barely hinted at the comic side of the affair, for the material was endless. This was the whistle and trailing fuse of the shell, but there was a very solid and serious kernel, full of the most deadly explosiveness. Thoughtful men divined it, but the generality suspected nothing. The word "transcendental" then was the maid of all work for those who could not think, as "Pre-Raphaelite"[17] has been more recently for people of the same limited housekeeping. The truth is, that there was a much nearer metaphysical relation and a much more distant aesthetic and literary relation between Carlyle and the Apostles of the Newness,[18] as they were called in New England, than has commonly been supposed. Both represented the reaction and revolt against *Philisterei,*[19] a renewal of the old battle begun in modern times by Erasmus and Reuchlin, and continued by Lessing, Goethe, and, in a far narrower sense, by Heine in Germany, and of which Fielding, Sterne, and Wordsworth in different ways have been the leaders in England. It was simply a struggle for fresh air, in which, if the windows could not be opened, there was danger that panes would be broken, though painted with images of saints and martyrs. Light colored by these reverend effigies was none the more respirable for being picturesque. There is only one thing better than tradition, and that is the original and eternal life out of which all tradition takes its rise. It was this life which the reformers demanded, with more or less clearness of consciousness and expression, life in politics, life in literature, life in religion. Of what use to import a gospel from Judæa, if we leave behind the soul that made it possible, the God who keeps it forever real and present? Surely Abana and Pharpar[20] *are* better than Jordan, if a living faith be mixed with those waters and none with these.

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[6] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, 1689-1762, a strong-minded and eccentric English writer.

[7] In Norse mythology, an unnamed eagle sits in the top of the ash-tree which holds together heaven, earth, and hell.

[8] The Saturnian reign returns. See note 8, p. 636.

[9] 1624-1691, founder of the Society of Friends, who were known for their simplicity and directness of speech.

[10] John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough, 1650-1722. His armies "swore terribly in Flanders." Sterne, *Tristram Shandy.*

[11] See notes 5, p. 588; 1, p. 834; 10, p. 840.

[12] A religious sect of millenarians of Cromwell's time, who believed it their duty to establish by force the kingdom of Christ which should be the fifth great monarchy, Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome being the other four. They tried to exercise the gift of tongues of the early church, bestowed upon the Apostles at Pentecost. See *Acts* ii.

[13] The plain where the tower of Babel was built, and where diversity of tongues is said to have arisen. See *Genesis* xi. 1-8.

[14] Script made of modified capital letters; used in medieval Greek and Latin manuscripts.

[15] A Greek Stoic philosopher, surnamed Labyrinthus, of the third century B. C.

[16] Cf. *King Lear V.* iii. 14-17.

[17] The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was a small group of English artists of Lowell's time who sought to express in their work such sincerity of feeling as is found in early Italian art.

[18] Transcendentalists.

[19] *Philisterei* is a name used by German university students for outsiders; figuratively, the unenlightened. Erasmus, 1465-1536, and Reuchlin, 1455-1522, ecclesiastical reformers and humanists; Lessing, 1729-1781, and Goethe, 1749-1832, German dramatists; and Heine, 1797-1856, a German lyric poet, all stood, in some way, for a new spirit of freedom, progress, and emancipation of spirit, as did the English novelists Fielding, 1707-1754, and Sterne, 1713-1768, and the poet Wordsworth, 1770-1850.

Scotch Presbyterianism as a motive of spiritual progress was dead; New England Puritanism was in like manner dead; in other words, Protestantism had made its fortune and no longer protested; but till Carlyle spoke out in the Old World and Emerson in the New, no one had dared to proclaim, *Le roi est mort: vive le roi!*[21] The meaning of which proclamation was essentially this: the vital spirit has long since departed out of this form once so kingly, and the great seal has been in commission long enough; but meanwhile the soul of man, from which all power emanates and to which it reverts, still survives in undiminished royalty; God still survives, little as you gentlemen of the Commission seem to be aware of it,—nay, may possibly outlive the whole of you, incredible as it may appear. The truth is, that both Scotch Presbyterianism and New England Puritanism made their new avatar[22] in Carlyle and Emerson, the heralds of their formal decease, and the tendency of the one toward Authority and of the other toward Independency might have been prophesied by whoever had studied history. The necessity was not so much in the men as in the principles they represented and the traditions which overruled them. The Puritanism of the past found its unwilling poet in Hawthorne, the rarest creative imagination of the century, the rarest in some ideal respects since Shakspere; but the Puritanism that cannot die, the Puritanism that made New England what it is, and is destined to make America what it should be, found its voice in Emerson. Though holding himself aloof from all active partnership in movements of reform, he has been the sleeping partner who has supplied a great part of their capital.

The artistic range of Emerson is narrow, as every well-read critic must feel at once; and so is that of Æschylus,[23] so is that of Dante, so is that of Montaigne, so is that of Schiller, so is that of nearly every one except Shakspere; but there is a gauge of height no less than of breadth, of individuality as well as of comprehensiveness, and, above all, there is the standard of genetic power,[24] the test of the masculine as distinguished from the receptive minds. There are staminate plants in literature, that make no fine show of fruit, but without whose pollen, the quintessence of fructifying gold, the garden had been barren. Emerson's mind is emphatically one of these, and there is no man to whom our æsthetic culture owes so much. The Puritan revolt had made us ecclesiastically, and the Revolution politically independent, but we were still socially and intellectually moored to English thought, till Emerson cut the cable and gave us a chance at the dangers and the glories of blue water. No man young enough to have felt it can forget, or cease to be grateful for, the mental and moral *nudge* which he received from the writings of his high-minded and brave-spirited countryman. That we agree with him, or that he always agrees with himself, is aside from the question; but that he arouses in us something that we are the better for having awakened, whether that something be of opposition or assent, that he speaks always to what is highest and least selfish in us, few Americans of the generation younger than his own would be disposed to deny. His oration[25] before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge, some thirty years ago, was an event without any former parallel in our literary annals, a scene to be always treasured in the memory for its picturesqueness and its inspiration. What crowded and breathless aisles, what windows clustering with eager heads, what enthusiasm of approval, what grim silence of foregone dissent! It was our Yankee version of a lecture by Abelard,[26] our Harvard parallel to the last public appearances of Schelling.

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[20] "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" 2 *Kings* v. 12.

[21] The king is dead: may the king live.

[22] In Hindu mythology, a reincarnation of a deity; hence here merely reincarnation.

[23] For this and the following names see index to notes.

[24] Power in productiveness.

[25] *The American Scholar,* delivered August 31, 1837.

We said that the "Transcendental Movement" was the protestant spirit of Puritanism seeking a new outlet and an escape from forms and creeds which compressed rather than expressed it. In its motives, its preaching, and its results, it differed radically from the doctrine of Carlyle. The Scotchman, with all his genius, and his humor gigantesque as that of Rabelais,[27] has grown shriller and shriller with years, degenerating sometimes into a common scold, and emptying very unsavory vials of wrath on the head of the sturdy British Socrates of worldly common sense. The teaching of Emerson tended much more exclusively to self-culture and the independent development of the individual man. It seemed to many almost Pythagorean[28] in its voluntary seclusion from commonwealth affairs. Both Carlyle and Emerson were disciples of Goethe, but Emerson in a far truer sense; and while the one, from his bias toward the eccentric, has degenerated more and more into mannerism, the other has clarified steadily toward perfection of style,—exquisite fineness of material, unobtrusive lowness of tone and simplicity of fashion, the most high-bred garb of expression. Whatever may be said of his thought, nothing can be finer than the delicious limpidness of his phrase. If it was ever questionable whether democracy could develop a gentleman, the problem has been affirmatively solved at last. Carlyle, in his cynicism and his admiration of force in and for itself, has become at last positively inhuman; Emerson, reverencing strength, seeking the highest outcome of the individual, has found that society and politics are also main elements in the attainment of the desired end, and has drawn steadily manward and worldward. The two men represent respectively those grand personifications in the drama of Æschylus, *Βία* and *Κράτος*.[29]

Among the pistillate plants kindled to fruitage by the Emersonian pollen, Thoreau is thus far the most remarkable; and it is something eminently fitting that his posthumous works should be offered us by Emerson, for they are strawberries from his own garden. A singular mixture of varieties, indeed, there is;—alpine, some of them, with the flavor of rare mountain air; others wood, tasting of sunny roadside banks or shy openings in the forest; and not a few seedlings swollen hugely by culture, but lacking the fine natural aroma of the more modest kinds. Strange books these are of his, and interesting in many ways,—instructive chiefly as showing how considerable a crop may be raised on a comparatively narrow close of mind, and how much a man may make of his life if he will assiduously follow it, though perhaps never truly finding it at last.

I have just been renewing my recollection of Mr. Thoreau's writings, and have read through six volumes in the order of their production. I shall try to give an adequate report of their impression upon me both as critic and as mere reader. He seems to me to have been a man with so high a conceit of himself that he accepted without questioning, and insisted on our accepting, his defects and weaknesses of character as virtues and powers peculiar to himself. Was he indolent, he finds none of the activities which attract or employ the rest of mankind worthy of him. Was he wanting in the qualities that make success, it is success that is contemptible, and not himself that lacks persistency and purpose. Was he poor, money was an unmixed evil. Did his life seem a selfish one, he condemns doing good as one of the weakest of superstitions. To be of use was with him the most killing bait of the wily tempter Uselessness. He had no faculty of generalization from outside of himself, or at least no experience which would supply the material of such, and he makes his own whim the law, his own range the horizon of the universe. He condemns a world, the hollowness of whose satisfactions he had never had the means of testing, and we recognize Apemantus[30] behind the mask of Timon. He had little active imagination; of the receptive he had much. His appreciation is of the highest quality; his critical power, from want of continuity of mind, very limited and inadequate. He somewhere cites a simile from Ossian,[31] as an example of the superiority of the old poetry to the new, though, even were the historic evidence less convincing, the sentimental melancholy of those poems should be conclusive of their modernness. He had none of the artistic mastery such as controls a great work to the serene balance of completeness, but exquisite mechanical skill in the shaping of sentences and paragraphs, or (more rarely) short bits of verse for the expression of a detached thought, sentiment, or image. His works give one the feeling of a sky full of stars,—something impressive and exhilarating certainly, something high overhead and freckled thickly with spots of isolated brightness; but whether these have any mutual relation with each other, or have any concern with our mundane matters, is for the most part matter of conjecture,—astrology as yet, and not astronomy.

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[26] One of the most inspiring of teachers and most famous of French scholars, 1079-1142. Schelling, (1775-1854) was a German philosopher.

[27] A French humorist, 1495-1553.

[28] Pythagoras, 582?-500 B. C., a Greek philosopher, established an organization resembling a religious brotherhood. He was also a great traveler; cf. p. 716, l. 53b.

[29] In *Prometheus Bound; βία* is strength and *κράτος* force.

[30] A cynical and churlish philosopher in Shakspere's *Timon of Athens;* Timon though a misanthrope, a hater of mankind, was of nobler nature.

[31] A third-century Gaelic bard.

It is curious, considering what Thoreau afterwards became, that he was not by nature an observer. He only saw the things he looked for, and was less poet than naturalist. Till he built his Walden shanty,[32] he did not know that the hickory grew in Concord. Till he went to Maine, he had never seen phosphorescent wood, a phenomenon early familiar to most country boys. At forty he speaks of the seeding of the pine as a new discovery, though one should have thought that its gold-dust of blowing pollen might have earlier drawn his eye. Neither his attention nor his genius was of the spontaneous kind. He discovered nothing. He thought everything a discovery of his own, from moonlight to the planting of acorns and nuts by squirrels. This is a defect in his character, but one of his chief charms as a writer. Everything grows fresh under his hand. He delved in his mind and nature; he planted them with all manner of native and foreign seeds, and reaped assiduously. He was not merely solitary, he would be isolated, and succeeded at last in almost persuading himself that he was autochthonous.[33] He valued everything in proportion as he fancied it to be exclusively his own. He complains in *Walden* that there is no one in Concord with whom he could talk of Oriental literature, though the man[34] was living within two miles of his hut who had introduced him to it. This intellectual selfishness becomes sometimes almost painful in reading him. He lacked that generosity of "communication" which Johnson[35] admired in Burke. De Quincey tells us that Wordsworth was impatient when any one else spoke of mountains, as if he had a peculiar property in them. And we can readily understand why it should be so; no one is satisfied with another's appreciation of his mistress. But Thoreau seems to have prized a lofty way of thinking (often we should be inclined to call it a remote one) not so much because it was good in itself as because he wished few to share it with him. It seems now and then as if he did not seek to lure others up "above our lower region of turmoil", but to leave his own name cut on the mountain peak as the first climber. This itch of originality infects his thought and style. To be misty is not to be mystic. He turns commonplaces end for end, and fancies it makes something new of them. As we walk down Park Street, our eye is caught by Dr. Winship's dumb-bells, one of which bears an inscription testifying that it is the heaviest ever put up at arm's length by any athlete; and in reading Mr. Thoreau's books we cannot help feeling as if he sometimes invited our attention to a particular sophism or paradox as the biggest yet maintained by any single writer. He seeks, at all risks, for perversity of thought, and revives the age of *concetti*[36] while he fancies himself going back to a pre-classical nature. "A day," he says, "passed in the society of those Greek sages, such as described in the Banquet of Xenophon,[37] would not be comparable with the dry wit of decayed cranberry-vines and the fresh Attic salt of the moss-beds." It is not so much the True that he loves as the Out-of-the-Way. As the Brazen Age shows itself in other men by exaggeration of phrase, so in him by extravagance of statement. He wishes always to trump your suit and to *ruff*[38] when you least expect it. Do you love Nature because she is beautiful? He will find a better argument in her ugliness. Are you tired of the artificial man? He instantly dresses you up an ideal in a Penobscot Indian, and attributes to this creature of his otherwise-mindedness as peculiarities things that are common to all woodsmen, white or red, and this simply because he has not studied the pale-faced variety.

This notion of an absolute originality, as if one could have a patent-right in it, is an absurdity. A man cannot escape in thought, any more than he can in language, from the past and the present. As no one ever invents a word, and yet language somehow grows by general contribution and necessity, so it is with thought. Mr. Thoreau seems to us to insist in public on going back to flint and steel, when there is a match-box in his pocket which he knows very well how to use at a pinch. Originality consists in power of digesting and assimilating thought, so that they become part of our life and substance. Montaigne, for example, is one of the most original of authors, though he helped himself to ideas in every direction. But they turn to blood and coloring in his style, and give a freshness of complexion that is forever charming. In Thoreau much seems yet to be foreign and unassimilated, showing itself in symptoms of indigestion. A preacher-up of Nature, we now and then detect under the surly and stoic garb something of the sophist and the sentimentalizer. I am far from implying that this was conscious on his part. But it is much easier for a man to impose on himself when he measures only with himself. A greater familiarity with ordinary men would have done Thoreau good, by showing him how many fine qualities are common to the race. The radical vice of his theory of life was, that he confounded physical with spiritual remoteness from men. A man is far enough withdrawn from his fellows if he keep himself clear of their weaknesses. He is not so truly withdrawn as exiled, if he refuse to share in their strength. It is a morbid self-consciousness that pronounces the world of men empty and worthless before trying it, the instinctive evasion of one who is sensible of some innate weakness, and retorts the accusation of it before any has made it but himself. To a healthy mind, the world is a constant challenge of opportunity. Mr. Thoreau had not a healthy mind, or he would not have been so fond of prescribing. His whole life was a search for the doctor. The old mystics had a wiser sense of what the world was worth. They ordained a severe apprenticeship to law and even ceremonial, in order to the gaining of freedom and mastery over these. Seven years of service for Rachel were to be rewarded at last with Leah.[39] Seven other years of faithfulness with her were to win them at last the true bride of their souls. Active Life was with them the only path to the Contemplative.

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[32] See p. 444, ff.

[33] indigenous, aboriginal

[34] Emerson

[35] Samuel Johnson, English essayist and critic, 1709-1784.

[36] Generally, affected expression; here, apparently, affected wisdom.

[37] The *Symposium*, a description of a supper at which Socrates is a principal speaker.

[38] To trump when lacking a card of the suit led.

Thoreau had no humor, and this implies that he was a sorry logician. Himself an artist in rhetoric, he confounds thought with style when he undertakes to speak of the latter. He was forever talking of getting away from the world, but he must be always near enough to it, nay, to the Concord corner of it, to feel the impression he makes there. He verifies the shrewd remark of Sainte-Beuve, *"On touche encore à son temps et très-fort, même quand on le repousse."*[40] This egotism of his is a Stylites pillar[41] after all, a seclusion which keeps him in the public eye. The dignity of man is an excellent thing, but therefore to hold one's self too sacred and precious is the reverse of excellent. There is something delightfully absurd in six volumes addressed to a world of such "vulgar fellows" as Thoreau affirmed his fellow-men to be. I once had a glimpse of a genuine solitary who spent his winters one hundred and fifty miles beyond all human communication, and there dwelt with his rifle as his only confidant. Compared with this, the shanty on Walden Pond has something the air, it must be confessed, of the Hermitage of La Chevrette.[42] I do not believe that the way to a true cosmopolitanism carries one into the woods or the society of musquashes.[43] Perhaps the narrowest provincialism is that of Self; that of Kleinwinkel[44] is nothing to it. The natural man, like the singing birds, comes out of the forest as inevitably as the natural bear and the wildcat stick there. To seek to be natural implies a consciousness that forbids all naturalness forever. It is as easy—and no easier—to be natural in a *salon* as in a swamp, if one do not aim at it, for what we call unnaturalness always has its spring in a man's thinking too much about himself. "It is impossible," said Turgot[45] "for a vulgar man to be simple."

I look upon a great deal of the modern sentimentalism about Nature as a mark of disease. It is one more symptom of the general liver-complaint. In a man of wholesome constitution the wilderness is well enough for a mood or a vacation, but not for a habit of life. Those who have most loudly advertised their passion for seclusion and their intimacy with nature, from Petrarch[46] down, have been mostly sentimentalists, unreal men, misanthropes on the spindle side, solacing an uneasy suspicion of themselves by professing contempt for their kind. They make demands on the world in advance proportioned to their inward measure of their own merit, and are angry that the world pays only by the visible measure of performance. It is true of Rousseau,[47] the modern founder of the sect, true of St. Pierre, his intellectual child, and of Chateaubriand, his grandchild, the inventor of what we may call the primitive forest cure and who first was touched by the solemn falling of a tree from natural decay in the windless silence of the woods. It is a very shallow view that affirms trees and rocks to be healthy, and cannot see that men in communities are just as true to the laws of their organization and destiny; that can tolerate the puffin[48] and the fox, but not the fool and the knave; that would shun politics because of its demagogues, and snuff up the stench of the obscene fungus. The divine life of Nature is more wonderful, more various, more sublime in man than in any other of her works, and the wisdom that is gained by commerce with men, as Montaigne and Shakspere gained it, or with one's own soul among men, as Dante, is the most delightful, as it is the most precious, of all. In outward nature it is still man that interests us, and we care far less for the things seen than the way in which they are seen by poetic eyes like Wordsworth's or Thoreau's, and the reflections they cast there. To hear the to-do that is often made over the simple fact that a man sees the image of himself in the outward world, one is reminded of a savage when he for the first time catches a glimpse of himself in a looking-glass. "Venerable child of Nature," we are tempted to say, "to whose science in the invention of the tobacco-pipe, to whose art in the tattooing of thine undegenerate hide not yet enslaved by tailors, we are slowly striving to climb back, the miracle thou beholdest is sold in my unhappy country for a shilling!" If matters go on as they have done, and everybody must needs blab of all the favors that have been done him by roadside and river-brink and woodland walk, as if to kiss and tell were no longer treachery, it will be a positive refreshment to meet a man who is as superbly indifferent to Nature as she is to him. By and by we shall have John Smith, of No. — 12, — 12th Street, advertising that he is not the J. S. who saw a cowlily on Thursday last, as he never saw one in his life, would not see one if he could, and is prepared to prove an alibi on the day in question.

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[39] *Genesis* xxix. 18-30.

[40] One makes an impression upon one's epoch and with force, even when one thrusts it aside.

[41] Simeon Stylites, a Syrian ascetic, who died in 459, spent the last thirty years of his life on a pillar 60 feet high. See Tennyson's poem, *St. Simeon Stylites.*

[42] A cottage at La Chevrette, the country home of Mme. Épinay. Here Rousseau wrote his *Nouvelle Heloïse.*

[43] A water animal called the Canadian muskrat.

[44] Literally, "Little-corner." Any obscure hamlet.

[45] A celebrated French statesman and political economist, 1727-1781.

[46] An Italian poet, 1304-1374.

Solitary communion with Nature does not seem to have been sanitary or sweetening in its influence on Thoreau's character. On the contrary, his letters show him more cynical as he grew older. While he studied with respectful attention the minks and woodchucks, his neighbors, he looked with utter contempt on the august drama of destiny of which his country was the scene, and on which the curtain had already risen. He was converting us back to a state of nature "so eloquently," as Voltaire[49] said of Rousseau, "that he almost persuaded us to go on all fours," while the wiser fates were making it possible for us to walk erect for the first time. Had he conversed more with his fellows, his sympathies would have widened with the assurance that his peculiar genius had more appreciation, and his writings a larger circle of readers, or at least a warmer one, than he dreamed of. I have the highest testimony[50] to the natural sweetness, sincerity, and nobleness of his temper, and in his books an equally irrefragable one to the rare quality of his mind. He was not a strong thinker, but a sensitive feeler. Yet his mind strikes us as cold and wintry in its purity. A light snow has fallen everywhere where he seems to come on the track of the shier sensations that would elsewhere leave no trace. I think greater compression would have done more for his fame. A feeling of sameness comes over us as we read so much. Trifles are recorded with an over-minute punctuality and conscientiousness of detail. He registers the state of his personal thermometer thirteen times a day. I cannot help thinking sometimes of the man who

> watches, starves, freezes, and sweats
> To learn but catechisms and alphabets
> Of unconcerning things, matters of fact,

and sometimes of the saying of the Persian poet, that "when the owl would boast, he boasts of catching mice at the edge of a hole." We could readily part with some of his affectations. It was well enough for Pythagoras to say, once for all, "When I was Euphorbus at the siege of Troy"; not so well for Thoreau to travesty it into "When I was a shepherd on the plains of Assyria."

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[47] Jean Jacques Rousseau, 1712-1778, Bernardin de Saint Pierre, 1737-1814, and François René Chateaubriand, 1768-1848, were all noted French writers.

[48] A fungus, a kind of puff-ball.

[49] A noted French writer, 1694-1778.

[50] Mr. Emerson in the Biographical Sketch prefixed to the *Excursions*. [Lowell's note.]

A naive thing said over again is anything but naive. But with every exception, there is no writing comparable with Thoreau's in kind, that is comparable with it in degree where it is best; where it disengages itself, that is, from the tangled roots and dead leaves of a second-hand Orientalism, and runs limpid and smooth and broadening as it runs, a mirror for whatever is grand and lovely in both worlds.

George Sand[51] says neatly, that "Art is not a study of positive reality," (*actuality* were the fitter word,) "but a seeking after ideal truth." It would be doing very inadequate justice to Thoreau if we left it to be inferred that this ideal element did not exist in him, and that too in larger proportion, if less obtrusive, than his nature-worship. He took nature as the mountain-path to an ideal world. If the path wind a good deal, if he record too faithfully every trip over a root, if he botanize somewhat wearisomely, he gives us now and then superb outlooks from some jutting crag, and brings us out at last into an illimitable ether, where the breathing is not difficult for those who have any true touch of the climbing spirit. His shanty-life was a mere impossibility, so far as his own conception of it goes, as an entire independency of mankind. The tub of Diogenes[52] had a sounder bottom. Thoreau's experiment actually presupposed all that complicated civilization which it theoretically abjured. He squatted on another man's land; he borrows an axe; his boards, his nails, his bricks, his mortar, his books, his lamp, his fish-hooks, his plow, his hoe, all turn state's evidence against him as an accomplice in the sin of that artificial civilization which rendered it possible that such a person as Henry D. Thoreau should exist at all. *Magnis tamen excidit ausis.*[53] His aim was a noble and a useful one, in the direction of "plain living and high thinking." It was a practical sermon on Emerson's text that "things are in the saddle and ride mankind,"[54] an attempt to solve Carlyle's problem of "lessening your denominator."[55] His whole life was a rebuke of the waste and aimlessness of our American luxury, which is an abject enslavement to tawdry upholstery. He had "fine translunary things" in him. His better style as a writer is in keeping with the simplicity and purity of his life. We have said that his range was narrow, but to be a master is to be a master. He had caught his English at its living source, among the poets and prose-writers of its best days; his literature was extensive and recondite; his quotations are always nuggets of the purest ore; there are sentences of his as perfect as anything in the language, and thoughts as clearly crystalized; his metaphors and images are always fresh from the soil; he had watched Nature like a detective who is to go upon the stand; as we read him, it seems as if all-out-of-doors had kept a diary and become its own Montaigne; we look at the landscape as in a Claude Lorraine[56] glass; compared with his, all other books of similar aim, even White's *Selborne*,[57] seem dry as a country clergyman's meteorological journal in an old almanac. He belongs with Donne and Browne and Novalis,[58] if not with the originally creative men, with the scarcely smaller class who are peculiar, and whose leaves shed their invisible thought-seed like ferns.

1865 1865

JONES VERY

Born, Salem, Massachusetts, 1813, died there, 1880. Very was son of a sea captain with whom he made several voyages to Europe. He graduated from Harvard in 1836 and was for two years afterwards tutor in Greek there. He was licensed to preach as a Unitarian clergyman but was never a pastor. He lived a retired life at Salem, preaching occasionally and engaged in literary work. ***Essays and Poems*** appeared in 1839 and again in a completed edition under the same title in 1886.

THE SOLDIER

He was not armed like those of eastern clime,
Whose heavy axes[1] felled their heathen foe;

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[51] George Sand was the pseudonym of a noted French woman novelist, 1804-1876.

[52] Diogenes, 412-323 B. C., an eccentric Greek cynic, said by Seneca to have lived in a tub.

[53] Nevertheless he failed in great attempts. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, ii. 328.

[54] See Emerson's *Ode* inscribed to W. H. Channing.

[55] "The Fraction of Life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your Numerator as by lessening your Denominator." *Sartor Resartus*, II. ix.

[56] A mirror so made as to bring out in a landscape, perspective and light and shade somewhat like those in the pictures of Claude Lorrain, 1600-1682, a famous French landscape painter.

[57] *Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* by Gilbert White, 1720-1793, curate of the parish of Selborne, England.

[58] John Donne, 1573-1631, an English poet, Sir Thomas Browne, 1605-1682, an English prose writer, Novalis, (pseudonym of Friedrich von Hardenberg) 1772-1801, a lyric poet of the school of the older German Romanticists, were all writers whose work is marked by almost an excess of personality, and by unusual stimulative power.

[1] Battle-axes were used in war by the Jews.

Nor was he clad like those of later time,
Whose breast-worn cross betrayed no cross below;[2]
Nor was he of the tribe of Levi[3] born,
Whose pompous rites proclaim how vain their prayer,
Whose chilling words are heard at night and morn,
Who rend their robes, but still their hearts would spare;
But he nor steel nor sacred robe had on,
Yet went he forth in God's almighty power,
And spake the word whose will is ever done
From day's first dawn till earth's remotest hour;
And mountains melted from his presence down,
And hell affrighted fled before his frown.

THE DEAD[4]

I see them,—crowd on crowd they walk the earth,
Dry leafless trees no autumn wind laid bare;
And in their nakedness find cause for mirth,
And all unclad would winter's rudeness dare;
No sap doth through their clattering branches flow,
Whence springing leaves and blossoms bright appear;
Their hearts the living God have ceased to know
Who gives the spring time to th' expectant year;
They mimic life, as if from him to steal
His glow of health to paint the livid cheek;
They borrow words for thoughts they cannot feel,
That with a seeming heart their tongue may speak;
And in their show of life more dead they live
Than those that to the earth with many tears they give.

THE WAR[5]

I saw a war, yet none the trumpet blew,
Nor in their hands the steel-wrought weapons bare;
And in that conflict armed there fought but few,
And none that in the world's loud tumults share;
They fought against their wills,—the stubborn foe
That mail-clad warriors left unfought within,
And wordy champions left unslain below,—
The ravening wolf though drest in fleecy skin;
They fought for peace,—not that the world can give,
Whose tongue proclaims the war its hands have ceased,
And bids us as each other's neighbor live,
Ere haughty Self within us has deceased;
They fought for him whose kingdom must increase,
Good will to men, on earth forever peace.

THE WILD ROSE OF PLYMOUTH

Upon the Plymouth shore the wild rose blooms
As when the Pilgrims lived beside the bay,
And scents the morning air with sweet perfumes;
Though new this hour, more ancient far than they;
More ancient than the wild yet friendly race
That roved the land before the Pilgrims came,
And here for ages found a dwelling-place,
Of whom our histories tell us but the name!
Though new this hour, out from the past it springs,
Telling this summer morning of earth's prime;
And happy visions of the future brings
That reach beyond, e'en to the verge of time;
Wreathing earth's children in one flowery chain
Of love and beauty, ever to remain.

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[2] Some of the Crusaders were prompted quite as much by personal ambition as by religious devotion.

[3] The Levites, originally attendants and assistants of the Jewish priests, in later times assumed the offices of priesthood.

[4] This strange sonnet characterizes those who though alive in body are really dead to all that is best in life.

[5] The battle in the heart between right and wrong.

RICHARD HENRY DANA, Jr.

Born, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1815, died, Rome, Italy, 1882. He was son of Richard Henry Dana. His Harvard career was interrupted by ill-health which occasioned a sea voyage to California, the basis of his classic of sea-life, *Two Years Before the Mast*, 1840. He graduated in 1837, studied and practiced law, contributed to legal and political periodicals, and was pursuing the study of international law abroad at the time of his death.

From TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST[1]

Chapter XXXI

There began now to be a decided change in the appearance of things. The days became shorter and shorter; the sun running lower in its course each day, and giving less and less heat, and the nights so cold as to prevent our sleeping on deck; the Magellan Clouds[2] in sight, of a clear night; the skies looking cold and angry; and, at times, a long, heavy, ugly sea, setting in from the southward, told us what we were coming to. Still, however, we had a fine, strong breeze, and kept on our way, under as much sail as our ship would bear. Toward the middle of the week, the wind hauled to the southward, which brought us upon a taut bowline, made the ship meet, nearly head-on, the heavy swell which rolled from that direction; and there was something not at all encouraging in the manner in which she met it. Being so deep and heavy, she wanted the buoyancy which should have carried her over the seas, and she dropped heavily into them, the water washing over the decks; and every now and then, when an unusually large sea met her fairly upon the bows, she struck it with a sound as dead and heavy as that with which a sledge-hammer falls upon the pile, and took the whole of it in upon the forecastle, and, rising, carried it aft in the scuppers,[3] washing the rigging off the pins, and carrying along with it everything which was loose on deck. She had been acting in this way all of our forenoon watch below; as we could tell by the washing of the water over our heads, and the heavy breaking of the seas against her bows, (with a sound as though she were striking against a rock,) only the thickness of the plank from our heads, as we lay in our berths, which are directly against the bows. At eight bells,[4] the watch was called, and we came on deck, one hand going aft to take the wheel, and another going to the galley to get the grub for dinner. I stood on the forecastle, looking at the seas, which were rolling high, as far as the eye could reach, their tops white with foam, and the body of them of a deep indigo blue, reflecting the bright rays of the sun. Our ship rose slowly over a few of the largest of them, until one immense fellow came rolling on, threatening to cover her, and which I was sailor enough to know, by the "feeling of her" under my feet, she would not rise over. I sprang upon the knight-heads,[5] and, seizing hold of the fore-stay, drew myself up upon it. My feet were just off the stanchion when she struck fairly into the middle of the sea, and it washed her fore and aft, burying her in the water. As soon as she rose out of it, I looked aft, and everything forward of the mainmast, except the long-boat, which was griped and double-lashed down to the ring-bolts, was swept off clear. The galley,[6] the pigsty, the hencoop, and a large sheep-pen which had been built upon the fore-hatch, were all gone in the twinkling of an eye,—leaving the deck as clean as a chin new-reaped,—and not a stick left to show where they had stood. In the scuppers lay the galley, bottom up, and a few boards floating about,—the wreck of the sheep-pen,—and half a dozen miserable sheep floating among them, wet through, and not a little frightened at the sudden change that had come upon them. As soon as the sea had washed by, all hands sprang up out of the forecastle to see what had become of the ship; and in a few moments the cook and Old Bill crawled out from under the galley, where they had been lying in the water, nearly smothered, with the galley over them. Fortunately, it rested against the bulwarks, or it would have broken some of their bones. When the water ran off, we picked the sheep up, and put them in the long-boat, got the galley back in its place, and set things a little to rights; but, had not our ship had uncommonly high bulwarks and rail, everything must have been washed overboard, not excepting Old Bill and the cook. Bill had been standing at the galley-door, with the kid[7] of beef in his hand for the forecastle mess, when away he went, kid, beef, and all. He held on to the kid till the last, like a good fellow, but the beef was gone, and when the water had run off we saw it lying high and dry, like a rock at low tide—nothing could hurt *that.* We took the loss of our beef very easily, consoling ourselves with the recollection that the cabin had more to lose than we; and chuckled not a little at seeing the remains of the chicken-pie and pancakes floating in the scuppers. "This will never do!" was what some said, and every one felt. Here we were, not yet within a thousand miles of the latitude of Cape Horn, and our decks swept by a sea not one half so high as we must expect to find there. Some blamed the captain for loading his ship so deep when he knew what he must expect; while others said that the wind was always southwest, off the Cape, in the winter; and that, running before it, we should not mind the seas so much. When we got down into the forecastle, Old Bill, who was somewhat of a croaker,—having met with a great many accidents at sea,—said that if that was the way she was going to act, we might as well make our wills, and balance the books at once, and put on a clean shirt. "'Vast there, you bloody old owl! you're always hanging out blue lights! You're frightened by the ducking you got in the scuppers, and can't take a joke! What's the use in being always on the lookout for Davy Jones?"[8] "Stand by!" says another, "and we'll get an afternoon watch below, by this scrape"; but in this they were disappointed, for at two bells[9] all hands were called and set to work, getting lashings upon everything on deck; and the captain talked of sending down the long topgallant masts; but as the sea went down toward night, and the wind hauled abeam, we left them standing, and set the studding sails.

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[1] Dana gives in this book an account of a voyage he took, at the age of nineteen, because of weakness of eyesight, just after his junior year at Harvard. Shipping as an ordinary sailor, he left Boston in the *Pilgrim*, August 14, 1834, for California via Cape Horn. The cargo consisted, as Dana says, "of everything under the sun—spirits of all kinds, tea, coffee, sugar, spices, raisins, molasses, hardware, crockery, tinware, cutlery, clothing . . . in fact everything that can be imagined from Chinese fireworks to English cart-wheels." See Chap. XIII. On May 8, 1836, Dana started from San Diego on the return trip in the *Alert*, which carried a cargo of forty thousand hides. The crew of the *Alert* consisted of fourteen sailors, a carpenter, cook, steward, three mates, and the captain. They were, at the opening of Chapter XXXI, eighteen hundred miles northwest of Cape Horn. Only those nautical terms have been annotated which are needed for a general understanding of the narrative, most explanations of rigging and of sailing directions being therefore omitted. For more detailed explanations see the *Lake English Classics* edition of *Two Years Before the Mast*.

[2] Three cloud-like nebulæ in the southern heavens discovered by Magellan, 1480-1541.

[3] Holes at the side of the deck, to let water run off, and the channels leading to them.

[4] Noon. A bell is rung for every half hour that has elapsed, beginning with twelve, four, and eight o'clock, day and night.

[5] Upright timbers placed to hold the bowsprit.

[6] ship's kitchen

The next day all hands were turned-to upon unbending the old sails, and getting up the new ones; for a ship, unlike people on shore, puts on her best suit in bad weather. The old sails were sent down, and three new topsails, and new fore and main courses, jib, and fore-topmast staysail, which were made on the coast, and never had been used, were bent, with a complete set of new earings, robands, and reef-points; and reef-tackles were rove to the courses, and spilling-lines to the topsails. These, with new braces and clew-lines fore and aft, gave us a good suit of running rigging.

The wind continued westerly, and the weather and sea less rough since the day on which we shipped the heavy sea, and we were making great progress under studding-sails, with our light sails all set, keeping a little to the eastward of south; for the captain, depending upon westerly winds off the Cape, had kept so far to the westward that, though we were within about five hundred miles of the latitude of Cape Horn, we were nearly seventeen hundred miles to the westward of it. Through the rest of the week we continued on with a fair wind, gradually, as we got more to the southward, keeping a more easterly course, and bringing the wind on our larboard quarter, until—

Sunday, June 26th; when, having a fine, clear day, the captain got a lunar observation, as well as his meridian altitude, which made us in lat. 47° 50′ S., long. 113° 49′ W.; Cape Horn bearing, according to my calculation, E. S. E. ½ E., and distant eighteen hundred miles.

Monday, June 27th. During the first part of this day the wind continued fair, and, as we were going before it, it did not feel very cold, so that we kept at work on deck in our common clothes and round jackets. Our watch had an afternoon watch below for the first time since leaving San Diego; and, having inquired of the third mate what the latitude was at noon, and made our usual guesses as to the time she would need to be up with the Horn, we turned-in for a nap. We were sleeping away "at the rate of knots," when three knocks on the scuttle[10] and "All hands, ahoy!" started us from our berths. What could be the matter? It did not appear to be blowing hard, and, looking up through the scuttle, we could see that it was a clear day overhead; yet the watch were taking in sail. We thought there must be a sail in sight, and that we were about to heave-to and speak her; and were just congratulating ourselves upon it,—for we had seen neither sail nor land since we left port,—when we heard the mate's voice on deck (he turned-in "all standing," and was always on deck the moment he was called) singing out to the men who were taking in the studding-sails, and asking where his watch[11] were. We did not wait for a second call, but tumbled up the ladder; and there, on the starboard bow, was a bank of mist, covering sea and sky, and driving directly for us. I had seen the same before, in my passage round in the *Pilgrim,* and knew what it meant, and that there was no time to be lost. We had nothing on but thin clothes, yet there was not a moment to spare, and at it we went.

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[7] wooden dish
[8] The evil spirit of the sea.
[9] one o'clock
[10] hatchway

The boys of the other watch were in the tops, taking in the topgallant studding sails and the lower and topmast studding sails were coming down by the run. It was nothing but "haul down and clew up," until we got all the studding-sails in, and the royals, flying jib, and mizzen topgallant sail furled, and the ship kept off a little, to take the squall. The fore and main topgallant sails were still on her, for the "old man" did not mean to be frightened in broad daylight, and was determined to carry sail till the last minute. We all stood waiting for its coming, when the first blast showed us that it was not to be trifled with. Rain, sleet, snow, and wind enough to take our breath from us, and make the toughest turn his back to windward! The ship lay nearly over upon her beam-ends; the spars and rigging snapped and cracked; and her topgallant-masts bent like whipsticks. "Clew up the fore and main topgallant sails!" shouted the captain, and all hands sprang to the clew lines. The decks were standing nearly at an angle of forty-five degrees, and the ship going like a mad steed through the water, the whole forward part of her in a smother of foam. The halyards were let go and the yard clewed down, and the sheets started, and in a few minutes the sails smothered and kept in by clewlines and buntlines. "Furl 'em, sir?" asked the mate. "Let go the topsail halyards, fore and aft!" shouted the captain in answer, at the top of his voice. Down came the topsail yards, the reef-tackles were manned and hauled out, and we climbed up to windward, and sprang into the weather rigging. The violence of the wind, and the hail and sleet, driving nearly horizontally across the ocean, seemed actually to pin us down to the rigging. It was hard work making head against them. One after another we got out upon the yards. And here we had work to do; for our new sails which had hardly been bent long enough to get the starch out of them, and the new earings and reef-points, stiffened with the sleet, knotted like pieces of iron wire. Having only our round jackets and straw hats on, we were soon wet through, and it was every moment growing colder. Our hands were soon stiffened and numbed, which, added to the stiffness of everything else, kept us a good while on the yard. After we had got the sail hauled upon the yard, we had to wait a long time for the weather earing to be passed; but there was no fault to be found, for French John was at the earing, and a better sailor never laid out on a yard; so we leaned over the yard and beat our hands upon the sail to keep them from freezing. At length the word came—"Haul out to leeward,"—and we seized the reef points and hauled the band taut for the lee earing. "Taut band—Knot away," and we got the first reef fast, and were just going to lay down, when—"Two reefs—two reefs!" shouted the mate, and we had a second reef to take, in the same way. When this was fast we laid down on deck, manned the halyards to leeward, nearly up to our knees in water, set the topsail, and then laid aloft on the main topsail yard, and reefed that sail in the same manner; for, as I have before stated, we were a good deal reduced in numbers, and, to make it worse, the carpenter, only two days before, had cut his leg with an axe, so that he could not go aloft. This weakened us so that we could not well manage more than one topsail at a time, in such weather as this, and, of course, our labor was doubled. From the main topsail yard, we went upon the main yard, and took a reef in the mainsail. No sooner had we got on deck than—"Lay aloft there, mizzen-top-men, and close-reef mizzen topsail!" This called me; and being nearest the rigging, I got first aloft, and out to the weather earing. English Ben was on the yard just after me, and took the lee earing, and the rest of our gang were soon on the yard, and began to fist the sail, when the mate considerately sent up the cook and steward to help us. I could now account for the long time it took to pass the other earings, for, to do my best, with a strong hand to help me at the dog's-ear, I could not get it passed until I heard them beginning to complain in the bunt. One reef after another we took in, until the sail was close-reefed, when we went down and hoisted away at the halyards. In the mean time, the jib had been furled and the staysail set, and the ship, under her reduced sail had got more upright, and was under management; but the two topgallant sails were still hanging in the buntlines, and slatting and jerking as though they would take the masts out of her. We gave a look aloft, and knew that our work was not done yet; and sure enough, no sooner did the mate see that we were on deck than—"Lay aloft there, four of you, and furl the topgallant sails!" This called me again, and two of us went aloft up the fore rigging, and two more up the main, upon the topgallant yards. The shrouds were now iced over, the sleet having formed a crust or cake round all the standing rigging, and on the weather side of the masts and yards. When we got upon the yard, my hands were so numb that I could not have cast off the knot of the gasket to have saved my life. We both lay over the yard for a few seconds, beating our hands upon the sail, until we started the blood into our fingers' ends, and at the next moment our hands were in a burning heat. My companion on the yard was a lad, who came out in the ship a weak, puny boy, from one of the Boston schools,—"no larger than a spritsail-sheet knot," nor "heavier than a paper of lamp-black," and "not strong enough to haul a shad off a gridiron," but who was now "as long as a spare topmast, strong enough to knock down an ox, and hearty enough to eat him." We fisted the sail together, and, after six or eight minutes of hard hauling and pulling and beating down the sail, which was as stiff as sheet-iron, we managed to get it furled; and snugly furled it must be, for we knew the mate well enough to be certain that if it got adrift again, we should be called up from our watch below, at any hour of the night, to furl it.

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[11] "The crew are divided into two divisions as equally as may be, called the watches. . . . They divide the time between them, being on and off duty, or as it is called, on deck and below, every other four hours." Dana.

I had been on the lookout for a chance to jump below and clap on a thick jacket and southwester; but when we got on deck we found that eight bells had been struck, and the other watch gone below, so that there were two hours of dog watch for us, and a plenty of work to do. It had now set in for a steady gale from the southwest; but we were not yet far enough to the southward to make a fair wind of it, for we must give Terra del Fuego a wide berth. The decks were covered with snow, and there was a constant driving of sleet. In fact, Cape Horn had set in with good earnest. In the midst of all this, and before it became dark, we had all the studding-sails to make up and stow away, and then to lay aloft and rig in all the booms, fore and aft, and coil away the tacks, sheets, and halyards. This was pretty tough work for four or five hands, in the face of a gale which almost took us off the yards, and with ropes so stiff with ice that it was almost impossible to bend them. I was nearly half an hour out on the end of the fore yard, trying to coil away and stop down the topmast studding sail tack and lower halyards. It was after dark when we got through, and we were not a little pleased to hear four bells[12] struck, which sent us below for two hours, and gave us each a pot of hot tea with our cold beef and bread, and, what was better yet, a suit of thick, dry clothing, fitted for the weather, in place of our thin clothes, which were wet through and now frozen stiff.

This sudden turn, for which we were so little prepared, was as unacceptable to me as to any of the rest; for I had been troubled for several days with a slight toothache, and this cold weather and wetting and freezing were not the best things in the world for it. I soon found that it was getting strong hold, and running over all parts of my face; and before the watch was out I went aft to the mate, who had charge of the medicine chest, to get something for it. But the chest showed like the end of a long voyage, for there was nothing that would answer but a few drops of laudanum, which must be saved for any emergency; so I had only to bear the pain as well as I could.

When we went on deck at eight bells,[13] it had stopped snowing, and there were a few stars out, but the clouds were still black, and it was blowing a steady gale. Just before midnight, I went aloft and sent down the mizzen royal yard, and had the good luck to do it to the satisfaction of the mate, who said it was done "out of hand and ship-shape." The next four hours below were but little relief to me, for I lay awake in my berth the whole time, from the pain in my face, and heard every bell strike, and, at

[12] six o'clock
[13] eight o'clock

four o'clock, turned out with the watch, feeling little spirit for the hard duties of the day. Bad weather and hard work at sea can be borne up against very well if one only has spirit and health; but there is nothing brings a man down, at such a time, like bodily pain and want of sleep. There was, however, too much to do to allow time to think; for the gale of yesterday, and the heavy seas we met with a few days before, while we had yet ten degrees more southing to make, had convinced the captain that we had something before us which was not to be trifled with, and orders were given to send down the long topgallant masts. The topgallant and royal yards were accordingly struck, the flying jib-boom rigged in, and the topgallant masts sent down on deck, and all lashed together by the side of the long-boat. The rigging was then sent down and coiled away below, and everything made snug aloft. There was not a sailor in the ship who was not rejoiced to see these sticks come down; for, so long as the yards were aloft, on the least sign of a lull, the topgallant sails were loosed, and then we had to furl them again in a snow-squall, and shin up and down single ropes caked with ice, and send royal yards down in the teeth of a gale coming right from the south pole. It was an interesting sight, too, to see our noble ship, dismantled of all her top-hamper of long tapering masts and yards, and boom pointed with spear-head, which ornamented her in port; and all that canvas, which a few days before had covered her like a cloud, from the truck to the water's edge, spreading far out beyond her hull on either side, now gone; and she stripped, like a wrestler for the fight. It corresponded, too, with the desolate character of her situation,—alone, as she was, battling with storms, wind, and ice, at this extremity of the globe, and in almost constant night.

Friday, July 1st. We were now nearly up to the latitude of Cape Horn, and having over forty degrees of easting to make, we squared away the yards before a strong westerly gale, shook a reef out of the fore-top sail, and stood on our way, east-by-south, with the prospect of being up with the Cape in a week or ten days. As for myself, I had had no sleep for forty-eight hours; and the want of rest, together with constant wet and cold, had increased the swelling, so that my face was nearly as large as two, and I found it impossible to get my mouth open wide enough to eat. In this state, the steward applied to the captain for some rice to boil for me, but he only got a—"No! d—— you! Tell him to eat salt junk and hard bread, like the rest of them." For this, of course, I was much obliged to him, and in truth it was just what I expected. However, I did not starve, for the mate, who was a man as well as a sailor, and had always been a good friend to me, smuggled a pan of rice into the galley, and told the cook to boil it for me, and not let the "old man" see it. Had it been fine weather, or in port, I should have gone below and lain by until my face got well; but in such weather as this, and short-handed as we were, it was not for me to desert my post; so I kept on deck, and stood my watch and did my duty as well as I could.

Saturday, July 2d. This day the sun rose fair, but it ran too low in the heavens to give any heat, or thaw out our sails and rigging; yet the sight of it was pleasant; and we had a steady "reef-topsail breeze" from the westward. The atmosphere, which had previously been clear and cold, for the last few hours grew damp, and had a disagreeable, wet chilliness in it; and the man who came from the wheel said he heard the captain tell "the passenger" that the thermometer had fallen several degrees since morning, which he could not account for in any other way than by supposing that there must be ice near us; though such a thing had never been heard of in this latitude at this season of the year. At twelve o'clock we went below, and had just got through dinner, when the cook put his head down the scuttle and told us to come on deck and see the finest sight that we had ever seen. "Where away, cook?" asked the first man who was up. "On the larboard bow." And there lay, floating in the ocean, several miles off, an immense, irregular mass, its top and points covered with snow, and its center of a deep indigo color. This was an iceberg, and of the largest size, as one of our men said who had been in the Northern ocean. As far as the eye could reach, the sea in every direction was of a deep blue color, the waves running high and fresh, and sparkling in the light, and in the midst lay this immense mountain-island, its cavities and valleys thrown into deep shade, and its points and pinnacles glittering in the sun. All hands were soon on deck, looking at it, and admiring in various ways its beauty and grandeur. But no description can give any idea of the strangeness, splendor, and, really, the sublimity, of the sight. Its great size,—for it must have been from two to three miles in circumference, and several hundred feet in height,—its slow motion, as its base rose and sank in the water, and its high points nodded against the clouds; the dashing of the waves upon it, which, breaking high with foam, lined its base with a white crust; and the thundering sound of the cracking of the mass, and the breaking and tumbling down of huge pieces; together with its nearness and approach, which added a slight element of fear,—all combined to give to it the character of true sublimity. The main body of the mass was, as I have said, of an indigo color, its base crusted with frozen foam; and as it grew thin and transparent toward the edges and top, its color shaded off from a deep blue to the whiteness of snow. It seemed to be drifting slowly toward the north, so that we kept away and avoided it. It was in sight all the afternoon; and when we got to leeward of it the wind died away, so that we lay-to quite near it for a greater part of the night. Unfortunately, there was no moon, but it was a clear night, and we could plainly mark the long, regular heaving of the stupendous mass, as its edges moved slowly against the stars. Several times in our watch loud cracks were heard, which sounded as though they must have run through the whole length of the iceberg, and several pieces fell down with a thundering crash, plunging heavily into the sea. Toward morning a strong breeze sprang up, and we filled away, and left it astern, and at daylight it was out of sight. The next day, which was—

Sunday, July 3rd, the breeze continued strong, the air exceedingly chilly, and the thermometer low. In the course of the day we saw several icebergs of different sizes, but none so near as the one which we saw the day before. Some of them, as well as we could judge, at the distance at which we were, must have been as large as that, if not larger. At noon we were in latitude 55° 12′ south, and supposed longitude 89° 5′ west. Toward night the wind hauled to the southward, and headed us off our course a little, and blew a tremendous gale; but this we did not mind, as there was no rain nor snow, and we were already under close sail.

Monday, July 4th. This was "Independence Day" in Boston. What firing of guns, and ringing of bells, and rejoicings of all sorts, in every part of our country! The ladies (who have not gone down to Nahant, for a breath of cool air, and sight of the ocean) walking the streets with parasols over their heads, and the dandies in their white pantaloons and silk stockings! What quantities of ice-cream have been eaten, and what quantities of ice brought into the city from a distance, and sold out by the lump and the pound! The smallest of the islands which we saw today would have made the fortune of poor Jack,[14] if he had had it in Boston; and I dare say he would have had no objection to being there with it. This, to be sure, was no place to keep the Fourth of July. To keep ourselves warm, and the ship out of the ice, was as much as we could do. Yet no one forgot the day; and many were the wishes and conjectures and comparisons, both serious and ludicrous, which were made among all hands. The sun shone bright as long as it was up, only that a scud of black clouds was ever and anon driving across it. At noon we were in lat. 54° 27′ S., and long. 85° 5′ W., having made a good deal of easting, but having lost in our latitude by the heading of the wind. Between daylight and dark—that is, between nine o'clock and three—we saw thirty-four ice islands of various sizes; some no bigger than the hull of our vessel, and others apparently nearly as large as the one that we first saw; though, as we went on, the islands became smaller and more numerous; and, at sundown of this day, a man at the mast-head saw large tracts of floating ice, called "field-ice," at the southeast. This kind of ice is much more dangerous than the large islands, for those can be seen at a distance, and kept away from; but the field-ice, floating in great quantities, and covering the ocean for miles and miles, in pieces of every size,—large, flat, and broken cakes, with here and there an island rising twenty and thirty feet, and as large as the ship's hull,—this it is very difficult to sheer clear of. A constant lookout was necessary; for any of these pieces, coming with the heave of the sea, were large enough to have knocked a hole in the ship, and that would have been the end of us; for no boat (even if we could have got one out) could have lived in such a sea; and no man could have lived in a boat in such weather. To make our condition still worse, the wind came out due east, just after sundown, and it blew a gale dead ahead, with hail and sleet and a thick fog, so that we could not see half the length of the ship. Our chief reliance, the prevailing westerly gales, was thus cut off; and here we were, nearly seven hundred miles to the westward of the Cape, with a gale dead from the eastward, and the weather

[14] The usual nickname for sailors.

so thick that we could not see the ice with which we were surrounded, until it was directly under our bows. At four P. M. (it was then quite dark) all hands were called, and sent aloft in a violent squall of hail and rain, to take in sail. We had now all got on our "Cape Horn rig"—thick boots, southwesters coming down over our necks and ears, thick trousers and jackets, and some with oil-cloth suits over all. Mittens, too, we wore on deck, but it would not do to go aloft with them on, for it was impossible to work with them, and, being wet and stiff, they might let a man slip overboard, for all the hold he could get upon a rope; so we were obliged to work with bare hands, which, as well as our faces, were often cut with the hail-stones, which fell thick and large. Our ship was now all cased with ice,—hull, spars, and standing rigging;—and the running rigging so stiff that we could hardly bend it so as to belay it, or, still worse, take a knot with it; and the sails nearly as stiff as sheet iron. One at a time (for it was a long piece of work and required many hands) we furled the courses, mizzen topsail, and fore topmast staysail, and close-reefed the fore and main topsails, and hove the ship to under the fore, with the main hauled up by the clew lines and bunt lines, and ready to be sheeted home, if we found it necessary to make sail to get to windward of an island. A regular lookout was then set, and kept by each watch in turn, until the morning. It was a tedious and anxious night. It blew hard the whole time, and there was an almost constant driving of either rain, hail, or snow. In addition to this, it was "as thick as muck," and the ice was all about us. The captain was on deck nearly the whole night, and kept the cook in the galley, with a roaring fire, to make coffee for him, which he took every few hours, and once or twice gave a little to his officers; but not a drop of anything was there for the crew. The captain, who sleeps all the daytime, and comes and goes at night as he chooses, can have his brandy-and-water in the cabin, and his hot coffee at the galley; while Jack, who has to stand through everything, and work in wet and cold, can have nothing to wet his lips or warm his stomach. This was a "temperance ship," and, like too many such ships, the temperance was all in the forecastle. The sailor, who only takes his one glass as it is dealt out to him, is in danger of being drunk; while the captain, who has all under his hand, and can drink as much as he chooses, and upon whose self-possession and cool judgment the lives of all depend, may be trusted with any amount, to drink at his will. Sailors will never be convinced that rum is a dangerous thing, by taking it away from them and giving it to the officers; nor that that temperance is their friend which takes from them what they have always had, and gives them nothing in the place of it. By seeing it allowed to their officers, they will not be convinced that it is taken from them for their good; and by receiving nothing in its place they will not believe that it is done in kindness. On the contrary, many of them look upon the change as a new instrument of tyranny. Not that they prefer rum. I never knew a sailor, in my life, who would not prefer a pot of hot coffee or chocolate, in a cold night, to all the rum afloat. They all say that rum only warms them for a time; yet, if they can get nothing better, they will miss what they have lost. The momentary warmth and glow from drinking it; the break and change which is made in a long, dreary watch by the mere calling all hands aft and serving of it out; and the simply having some event to look forward to and to talk about,—all give it an importance and a use which no one can appreciate who has not stood his watch before the mast. On my passage round Cape Horn before, the vessel that I was in was not under temperance articles, and grog was served out every middle and morning watch, and after every reefing of topsails; and though I had never drunk rum before, and never intend to again, I took my allowance then at the capstan, as the rest did, merely for the momentary warmth it gave the system, and the change in our feelings and aspect of our duties on the watch. At the same time, as I have stated, there was not a man on board who would not have pitched the rum to the dogs, (I have heard them say so a dozen times), for a pot of coffee or chocolate; or even for our common beverage,—"water bewitched and tea begrudged," as it was.[15] The temperance reform is the best thing that ever was undertaken for the sailor; but when the grog is taken from him, he ought to have something in its place. As it is now, in most vessels, it is a mere saving to the owners; and this accounts for the sudden increase of temperance ships, which surprised even the best friends of the cause. If every merchant, when he struck grog from the list of the expenses of his ship, had been obliged to substitute as much coffee, or chocolate, as would give each man a pot-full when he came off the topsail yard, on a stormy night,—I fear Jack might have gone to ruin on the old road.[16]

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[15] "The proportions of the ingredients of the tea that was made for us (and ours, as I have before stated, was a favorable specimen of American merchantmen) were a pint of tea and a pint and a half of molasses to about three gallons of water. These are all boiled down together in the "coppers," and, before serving it out, the mess is stirred up with a stick, so as to give each man his fair share of sweetening and tea-leaves. The tea for the cabin is, of course, made in the usual way, in a teapot, and drunk with sugar." [Dana's note.]

But this is not doubling Cape Horn. Eight hours of the night our watch was on deck, and during the whole of that time we kept a bright lookout; one man on each bow, another in the bunt of the fore yard, the third mate on the scuttle, one on each quarter, and a man always standing by the wheel. The chief mate was everywhere, and commanded the ship when the captain was below. When a large piece of ice was seen in our way, or drifting near us, the word was passed along, and the ship's head turned one way and another; and sometimes, the yards squared or braced up. There was little else to do than to look out; and we had the sharpest eyes in the ship on the forecastle. The only variety was the monotonous voice of the lookout forward,—"Another island!" "Ice ahead!" "Ice on the lee bow!" "Hard up the helm!" "Keep her off a little!" "Stead-y!"

In the mean time the wet and cold had brought my face into such a state that I could neither eat nor sleep; and though I stood it out all night, yet, when it became light, I was in such a state that all hands told me I must go below, and lie-by for a day or two, or I should be laid up for a long time, and perhaps have the lock-jaw. When the watch was changed I went into the steerage, and took off my hat and comforter, and showed my face to the mate, who told me to go below at once, and stay in my berth until the swelling went down, and gave the cook orders to make a poultice for me, and said he would speak to the captain.

I went below and turned-in, covering myself over with blankets and jackets, and lay in my berth nearly twenty-four hours, half asleep and half awake, stupid from the dull pain. I heard the watch called, and the men going up and down, and sometimes a noise on deck, and a cry of "ice," but I gave little attention to anything. At the end of twenty-four hours the pain went down, and I had a long sleep, which brought me back to my proper state; yet my face was so swollen and tender that I was obliged to keep to my berth for two or three days longer. During the two days I had been below, the weather was much the same that it had been,—head winds, and snow and rain; or, if the wind came fair, too foggy, and the ice too thick, to run. At the end of the third day the ice was very thick; a complete fog-bank covered the ship. It blew a tremendous gale from the eastward, with sleet and snow, and there was every promise of a dangerous and fatiguing night. At dark, the captain called all hands aft, and told them that not a man was to leave the deck that night; that the ship was in the greatest danger; any cake of ice might knock a hole in her, or she might run on an island and go to pieces. No one could tell whether she would be a ship the next morning. The lookouts were then set, and every man was put in his station. When I heard what was the state of things, I began to put on my clothes to stand it out with the rest of them, when the mate came below, and looking at my face, ordered me back to my berth, saying that if we went down, we should all go down together, but if I went on deck I might lay myself up for life. This was the first word I had heard from aft; for the captain had done nothing, nor inquired how I was, since I went below.

In obedience to the mate's orders, I went back to my berth; but a more miserable night I never wish to spend. I never felt the curse of sickness so keenly in my life. If I could only have been on deck with the rest, where something was to be done and seen and heard, where there were fellow-beings for companions in duty and danger; but to be cooped up alone in a black hole, in equal danger, but without the power to do, was the hardest trial. Several times, in the course of the night, I got up, determined to go on deck; but the silence which showed that there was nothing doing, and the knowledge that I might make myself seriously ill, for nothing, kept me back. It was not easy to sleep, lying as I did with my head directly against the bows, which might be dashed in by an island of ice, brought down by the very next sea that struck her. This was the only time I had been ill since I left Boston, and it was the worst time it could have happened. I felt almost willing to bear the plagues of Egypt for the rest of the voyage, if I could but be well and strong for that one night. Yet it was a dreadful night for those on deck. A watch of eighteen hours, with wet and cold and constant anxiety, nearly wore them out; and when they came below at nine o'clock for breakfast, they almost dropped asleep on their chests, and some of them were so stiff that they could with difficulty sit down. Not a drop of anything had been given them during the whole time, (though the captain, as on the night that I was on deck, had his coffee every four hours), except that the mate stole a pot-full of coffee for two men to drink behind the galley, while he kept a lookout for the captain. Every man had his station, and was not allowed to leave it; and nothing happened to break the monotony of the night, except once setting the main topsails, to run clear of a large island to leeward, which they were drifting fast upon. Some of the boys got so sleepy and stupefied that they actually fell asleep at their posts; and the young third mate, whose station was the exposed one of standing on the fore scuttle, was so stiff, when he was relieved, that he could not bend his knees to get down. By a constant lookout, and a quick shifting of the helm, as the islands and pieces came in sight, the ship went clear of everything but a few small pieces, though daylight showed the ocean covered for miles. At daybreak it fell a dead calm, and with the sun the fog cleared a little, and a breeze sprang up from the westward, which soon grew into a gale. We had now a fair wind, daylight, and comparatively clear weather; yet, to the surprise of every one, the ship continued hove-to. "Why does not he run?" "What is the captain about?" was asked by everyone; and from questions it soon grew into complaints and murmurings. When the daylight was so short, it was too bad to lose it, and a fair wind, too, which every one had been praying for. As hour followed hour, and the captain showed no sign of making sail, the crew became impatient, and there was a good deal of talking and consultation together on the forecastle. They had been beaten out with the exposure and hardship, and impatient to get out of it, and this unaccountable delay was more than they could bear in quietness, in their excited and restless state. Some said that the captain was frightened,—completely cowed by the dangers and difficulties that surrounded us, and was afraid to make sail; while others said that in his anxiety and suspense he had made a free use of brandy and opium, and was unfit for his duty. The carpenter, who was an intelligent man, and a thorough seaman, and had great influence with the crew, came down into the forecastle, and tried to induce the crew to go aft and ask the captain why he did not run, or request him, in the name of all hands, to make sail. This appeared to be a very reasonable request, and the crew agreed that if he did not make sail before noon they would go aft. Noon came, and no sail was made. A consultation was held again, and it was proposed to take the ship from the captain and give the command of her to the mate, who had been heard to say that if he could have his way the ship would have been half the distance to the Cape before night,—ice or no ice. And so irritated and impatient had the crew become, that even this proposition, which was open mutiny, punishable with state prison, was entertained, and the carpenter went to his berth, leaving it tacitly understood that something serious would be done if things remained as they were many hours longer. When the carpenter left, we talked it all over, and I gave my advice strongly against it. Another of the men, too, who had known something of the kind attempted in another ship by a crew who were dissatisfied with their captain, and which was followed with serious consequences, was opposed to it. Stimson, who soon came down, joined us, and we determined to have nothing to do with it. By these means, they were soon induced to give it up for the present, though they said they would not lie where they were much longer without knowing the reason.

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[16] "I do not wish these remarks, so far as they relate to the saving of expense in the outfit, to be applied to the owners of our ship, for she was supplied with an abundance of stores of the best kind that are given to seamen; though the dispensing of them is necessarily left to the captain. And I learned, on our return, that the captain withheld many of the stores from us, from mere ugliness. He brought several barrels of flour home, but would not give us the usual twice-a-week duff, and so as to other stores. Indeed, so high was the reputation of "the employ" among men and officers for the character and outfit of their vessels, and for their liberality in conducting their voyages, that when it was known that they had the *Alert* fitting out for a long voyage, and that hands were to be shipped at a certain time,—a half hour before the time, as one of the crew told me, sailors were steering down the wharf, hopping over the barrels, like a drove of sheep." [Dana's note.]

The affair remained in this state until four o'clock, when an order came forward for all hands to come aft upon the quarter-deck. In about ten minutes they came forward again, and the whole affair had been blown. The carpenter, very prematurely, and without any authority from the crew, had sounded the mate as to whether he would take command of the ship, and intimated an intention to displace the captain; and the mate, as in duty bound, had told the whole to the captain, who immediately sent for all hands aft. Instead of violent measures, or, at least, an outbreak of quarter-deck bravado, threats, and abuse, which they had every reason to expect, a sense of common danger and common suffering seemed to have tamed his spirit, and begotten something like a humane fellow-feeling; for he received the crew in a manner quiet, and even almost kind. He told them what he had heard, and said that he did not believe that they would try to do any such thing as was intimated; that they had always been good men,—obedient, and knew their duty, and he had no fault to find with them, and asked them what they had to complain of; said that no one could say that he was slow to carry sail (which was true enough), and that, as soon as he thought it was safe and proper, he should make sail. He added a few words about their duty in their present situation, and sent them forward, saying that he should take no further notice of the matter; but, at the same time, told the carpenter to recollect whose power he was in, and that if he heard another word from him he would have cause to remember him to the day of his death.

This language of the captain had a very good effect upon the crew, and they returned quietly to their duty.

For two days more the wind blew from the southward and eastward; or in the short intervals when it was fair, the ice was too thick to run; yet the weather was not so dreadfully bad, and the crew had watch and watch. I still remained in my berth, fast recovering, yet still not well enough to go safely on deck. And I should have been perfectly useless; for, from having eaten nothing for nearly a week, except a little rice which I forced into my mouth the last day or two, I was as weak as an infant. To be sick in a forecastle is miserable indeed. It is the worst part of a dog's life, especially in bad weather. The forecastle, shut up tight to keep out the water and cold air; the watch either on deck or asleep in their berths; no one to speak to; the pale light of the single lamp, swinging to and fro from the beam, so dim that one can scarcely see, much less read, by it; the water dropping from the beams and carlines and running down the sides, and the forecastle so wet and dark and cheerless, and so lumbered up with chests and wet clothes, that sitting up is worse than lying in the berth! These are some of the evils. Fortunately, I needed no help from any one, and no medicine; and if I had needed help I don't know where I should have found it. Sailors are willing enough, but it is true, as is often said, no one ships for nurse on board a vessel. Our merchant ships are always undermanned, and if one man is lost by sickness, they cannot spare another to take care of him. A sailor is always presumed to be well, and if he's sick he's a poor dog. One has to stand his wheel, and another his lookout, and the sooner he gets on deck again the better.

Accordingly, as soon as I could possibly go back to my duty, I put on my thick clothes and boots and southwester, and made my appearance on deck. Though I had been but a few days below, yet everything looked strangely enough. The ship was cased in ice,—decks, sides, masts, yards, and rigging. Two close-reefed top-sails were all the sail she had on, and every sail and rope was frozen so stiff in its place that it seemed as though it would be impossible to start anything. Reduced, too, to her topmasts, she had altogether a most forlorn and crippled appearance. The sun had come up brightly; the snow was swept off the decks and ashes thrown upon them so that we could walk, for they had been as slippery as glass. It was, of course, too cold to carry on any ship's work, and we had only to walk the deck and keep ourselves warm. The wind was still ahead, and the whole ocean, to the eastward, covered with islands and field-ice. At four bells the order was given to square away the yards; and the man who came from the helm said that the captain had kept her off to N.N.E. What could this mean? Some said that he was going to put into Valparaiso and winter, and others that he was going to run out of the ice and cross the Pacific, and go home round the Cape of Good Hope. Soon, however, it leaked out, and we found that we were running for the Straits of Magellan. The news soon spread through the ship, and all tongues were at work talking about it. No one on board had been through the straits; but I had in my chest an account of the passage of the ship *A. J. Donelson*, of New York, through those straits a few years before. The account was given by the captain, and the representation was as favorable as possible. It was soon read by every one on board, and various opinions pronounced. The determination of our captain had at least this good effect; it gave us something to think and talk about, made a break in our life, and diverted our minds from the monotonous dreariness of the prospect before us. Having made a fair wind of it, we were going off at a good rate, and leaving the thickest of the ice behind us. This, at least, was something.

Having been long enough below to get my hands well warmed and softened, the first handling of the ropes was rather tough; but a few days hardened them, and as soon as I got my mouth open wide enough to take in a piece of salt beef and hard bread, I was all right again.

Sunday, July 10th. Lat. 54° 10′, lon. 79° 07′. This was our position at noon. The sun was out bright; the ice was all left behind, and things had quite a cheering appearance. We brought our wet pea-jackets and trousers on deck, and hung them up in the rigging, that the breeze and the few hours of sun might dry them a little; and, by the permission of the cook, the galley was nearly filled with stockings and mittens, hung round to be dried. Boots, too, were brought up; and, having got a little tar and slush from below, we gave them a thick coat. After dinner all hands were turned-to, to get the anchors over the bows, bend on the chains, etc. The fish-tackle was got up, fish davit[17] rigged out, and, after two or three hours of hard and cold work, both the anchors were ready for instant use, a couple of kedges got up, a hawser coiled away upon the fore-hatch, and the deep-sea lead-line overhauled and got ready. Our spirits returned with having something to do; and when the tackle was manned to bowse the anchor home, notwithstanding the desolation of the scene, we struck up "Cheerly, ho!" in full chorus. This pleased the mate, who rubbed his hands and cried out, "That's right, my boys; never say die! That sounds like the old crew!" and the captain came up, on hearing the song, and said to the passenger, within hearing of the man at the wheel, "That sounds like a lively crew. They'll have their song so long as there're enough left for a chorus!"

This preparation of the cable and anchors was for the passage of the straits; for, being very crooked, and with a variety of currents, it is necessary to come frequently to anchor. This was not, by any means, a pleasant prospect; for, of all the work that a sailor is called upon to do in cold weather, there is none so bad as working the ground-tackle. The heavy chain-cables to be hauled and pulled about decks with bare hands; wet hawsers, slip-ropes, and buoy-ropes to be hauled aboard dripping in water, which is running up your sleeves, and freezing; clearing hawse under the bows; getting under way and coming-to at all hours of the night and day, and a constant lookout for rocks and sands and turns of tides,—these are some of the disagreeables of such a navigation to a common sailor. Fair or foul, he wants to have nothing to do with the ground-tackle between port and port. One of our hands, too, had unluckily fallen upon a half of an old newspaper which contained an account of the passage, through the straits, of a Boston brig, called, I think, the *Peruvian*, in which she lost every cable and anchor she had, got aground twice, and arrived at Valparaiso in distress. This was set off against the account of the *A. J. Donelson*, and led us to look forward with less confidence to the passage, especially as no one on board had ever been through, and the captain had no very perfect charts. However, we were spared any further experience on the point; for the next day, when we must have been near the Cape of Pillars, which is the south-west point of the mouth of the straits, a gale set in from the eastward, with a heavy fog, so that we could not see half of the ship's length ahead. This, of course, put an end to the project for the present; for a thick fog and a gale blowing dead ahead are not the most favorable circumstances for the passage of difficult and dangerous straits. This weather, too, seemed likely to last for some time, and we could not think of beating about the mouth of the straits for a week or two, waiting for a favorable opportunity; so we braced up on the larboard tack, put the ship's head due south, and struck her off for Cape Horn again.

1834-1840 1840

WILLIAM WETMORE STORY

Born, Salem, Massachusetts, 1819, died at Vallombrosa, Italy, 1895. He was son of Justice Story of the United States Supreme Court, studied law at Harvard, practiced law and wrote works on legal subjects. In 1848 he removed from Boston to Rome, where he devoted the remainder of his life to literature and art. "Cleopatra," in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, is one of his best-known pieces of sculpture. Besides *Roba di Roma*, prose, 1862, and *Fiametta*, a novel, 1885, he wrote *Graffiti d'Italia* (1869) and several other volumes of verse.

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[17] "A short spar with a sheave at the end used as a crane to hoist the flukes of the anchor to the top of the bow." Worcester.

THE CONFESSIONAL

Forgive me, Father! Those were wild, bad words,
From the foul bottom of my heart stirred up
By agitation.—Turn not thus away,
I will repent—I think I *do* repent,—
Yet who can answer, when temptation comes,
For calm resolves. When windy passion swells
The turbulent thoughts, our weakly-builded dykes
Burst, and the overbearing sea, let through,
In one wild rush pours in, and swirls away
Our boasted resolutions, like light chips.

Yet, holy Father! give me now your hand,
And I will try to think of youth and home,
And violets in spring, and all sweet things
I used to love, when I was innocent,
For they may calm me—Yet, no! no! 'tis vain!
The great black wall of yesterday shuts out
All other yesterdays that went before;
I cannot overpeer its horror and look down
Into the peaceful garden-plot beyond.

I was not all to blame. You, who have heard
So many tales of passion, lean your ear,
And I will tell you mine—but make the sign,
The blessed sign of the cross, ere I begin.

'Twas twilight—and the early lighted lamps
Were flickering down into the Arno's[1] tide
While yet the daylight lingered in the skies,
Silvering and paling—when I saw him first.
I was returning from my work, and paused
Upon the Bridge of Santa Trinita,
To rest, and think how fair our Florence is,
How sweet the air smelt after that close room,
And how privation, like a darkened tube,
Made joy the sweeter, through its darkness seen.

And I remember, o'er the hazy hills
Far, far away, how exquisitely fair
The twilight seemed that night—my heart was soft
With tender longings, misted with a dim
Sad pleasure—as a mirror with the breath—
(Ah! never will those feelings come again.)
I wondered if the thronging crowd that passed,
Felt half the wondrous beauty of the hour;
And I was in a mood to take a stamp
From any passing chance,—even like those clouds
That caught the tenderest thrill of dying light,—
When by some inward sense, I know not what,
I felt that I was gazed at, drawn away
By eyes that had a strange magnetic will,
And so I turned from those far hills to see
A stranger;—no! even then he did not seem
A stranger—but as one I once had known,
Not here in Florence, not in any place,
But somehow in my spirit known and seen,
Elsewhere, I know not where, perhaps in dreams.
I felt his eyes were staying upon me,
And a sweet, serious smile was on his mouth,
Nor could I help but look and smile again.
I know not what it was went to and fro
Between us then, in that swift smile and glance;
But something went that thrilled me through and through,
And fluttered all my thoughts, as when a bird
Shivers with both his wings some peaceful pool:
We neither spoke—but that quick clash of souls
Had struck a spark that set me all a-fire.

With what a turbulent heart I traversed then
The Bridge, and plunged into the narrow streets,
Heavy with shadows, till I gained my room;
Yet there I could not rest—I leaned from out
My balcony above the street and gazed
At every passer-by, the evening long,
Till midnight struck, and all the humming crowd
Poured home from theater and opera,—
In hopes to see him. Silent grew the streets,
Save here and there, where rang the echoing feet
Of some late walker singing as he went.
The few lamps on the lonely pavement glared,
The still stars stood in the dark river of night,

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[1] Florence is situated on the Arno.

That flowed between the house-tops far above,
And all was rest.—At last I lit my lamp,
And with a prayer, (I never prayed till then,
It seemed to me—so fervently I prayed,)
Crept to my bed. Half dreaming I rehearsed
The evening scene—and saw again his smile—
And wondered who he was—and if again
We ere should meet—and what would come of it—
Until at last I wore away to sleep,
Almost when morning was upon the hills.

And days went by—and that one thought of him
Ran through thought's labyrinth, like a silver clue.
Waking, I did not see my work; I sewed
Love's broidery in with every stitch I made;
And I grew silent, sad, and spiritless,
And ceased to talk and jest as I was wont,
Until Beata laughed at me, and said,
Pointing me out to all the other girls,
"Santa Maria! Nina is in love!"
And all of them looked up at me and laughed;
I could have struck her—but I had to laugh.

At last the festa of the Madonna[2] came
And in the costume of my native town,
(I am an Albanese, as you know,)
I, and Beata, and the other girls,
Went to the Duomo,[3] as we always do,
To see the grand procession and hear mass;
And there, I kneeling prayed for him and me.
I heard the laboring organ in the dome
Struggle and groan, and, stopping short, give place
Unto the Bishop's harsh and croaking chant;
I heard, at intervals, the crowd's response
Rising around me with muffled roar,
The steaming censer clicking as it swung,
The sharp, quick tinkle of the bell; at last
The whole crowd rustling sank upon its knees,
And silence reigned—the host was raised—a strain
Of trumpets sounded—and the mass was o'er;
My heart was full—I lingered when they went,
Beata, Maddalena, Bice, all,[4]
And leaned against a pillar in the choir,
Where Michael Angelo's half finished group[5]
Stands in the shadow—I, in shadow too—
How long I stood I know not, but a voice
That made my blood stop, whispered me at last.
I knew that it was he. What could I do?
He knew I loved him—and I knew he loved.
He said to me . . . . Ah! no, I cannot say
What words he said,—to me they were not words;
But ere we parted it was late at night,
And I was happy,—oh, so happy then,—
It seemed as if this earth could never add
One little drop more to the joy I owned,
For all that passionate torrent pent within
My heart had found its utterance and response.

He was Venetian, and that radiant hair
We black-haired girls so covet, haloed round
His sunny northern face and soft blue eyes.
I know not why he loved me—me so black,
With this black skin, that every Roman has,
And these black eyes, black hair, that I so hate.
Why loved he not Beata?—she is fair,—
But yet he often took these cheeks of mine
Between his hands, and, looking in my eyes,
Swore that Beata's body was not worth
One half my finger—and then kissed me full
Upon the mouth as if to seal his oath.
Ah! glorious seal—I feel those lips there now!
And on my forehead, too, one kiss still glows
Like a great star—look here—it was the day
He hung this little cross upon my neck,
And pressed his lips, here, just above the eyes.

Ah, well! those days are gone. No! No! No! No!
They are not gone;—I love him madly now,
I love him madly as I loved him then;
And I again would . . . . No! I will be calm—

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[2] Possibly the feast of the Annunciation, March 25.

[3] The cathedral.

[4] Since all the vowels are sounded, the line is metrical. Bice (pr. Beechy) is diminutive of Beatrice.

[5] This is of marble, a Pietà or representation of the lamentation of Mary over the body of Jesus taken from the cross.

Just place your hand upon my forehead here,
It soothes me—I will try to be more calm.

I gave him all—heart, soul, and body—all—
Even the great hope of another world
I would have given for one wish of his;
With him this life was all I asked to have—
'Twas Paradise—what more or better than
Was there to hope for?—without him the best
Was only hell—*is* only hell to me.

Ah, God! how blissfully those days went by;
You could not heap a golden cup more full
Of rubied wine than was my heart with joy.
Long mornings in his studio there I sat
And heard his voice—or, when he did not speak
I felt his presence, like a rich perfume,
Fill all my thoughts. At times he'd rise and come
And sit beside me, take my hands in his,
And call me best and dearest—heaping names
Of love upon me—till beneath their weight
I bent, and clung unto his neck, and wept;
Oh! what glad tears, he kissed them all away.

I was his model—hours and hours I posed
For him to paint his Cleopatra—fierce,
With her squared brows, and full Egyptian lips,
A great gold serpent on her rounded arm,
('Twas mine, look now how lean and bony 'tis,)
And a broad band of gold around her head;
And oft he'd say, "I am your Antony,
Ready to fling the world away for you;
But you, if I should fall upon my sword,
You'd live for Caesar's triumph—would you not?"
And I, a little vexed, although I knew
He did not mean his words, would laugh and say,
'For all your boast, you men are all the same,
You would not risk a kingdom for your love,
You'd marry weak Octavia—all of you.'[6]

Had I not reason? Yet those foolish words,
They burn here in my memory, like red drops
Of molten brass—those little foolish jests
Were eggs of serpents that now hiss and sting;
I curse my tongue that spoke them—for he loves,
I know he loves me—loves me now as then.

What a long trail of flushed and orient light
Those summer days were! but the autumn came,
The stricken, bleeding autumn came at last.
I saw him grow more serious, day by day,
More fitful, sudden, gusty—something weighed
Upon his mind I could not understand—
I sought to win his secret—but in vain.
''Tis nothing, love,' he'd say—then rising quick,
With sudden push would dash away his hair
From his grand forehead—to the window go,
And with his back turned to me, stand and stare
For full five minutes in the garden there.
I knew all was not right, yet dared not ask.
I waited as we women have to wait.
At last 'twas clear,—two words made all things clear—
'Love I must go to Venice,' 'Must?' 'Yes, must!'
'Then I go too.' 'No! no! ah! Nina, no—
Four weeks pass swiftly—one short month, and then
I shall return to Florence, and to you.'

Vain were my words, he went—alas, he went
With all the sunshine—and I wore alone
The weary weeks out of that hateful month.
Another month I waited, nervous, fierce
With love's impatience—thinking every day
I heard his voice and step upon the stair,
And listening to the carriages all night,
And straining each back as it passed the house,—
With fits of weeping when it rolled away
In the lone midnight.—When that month was gone
My heart was all a-fire—I could not stay,
Consumed with jealous fears that wore me down
Into a fever—Necklace, earrings, all,

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[6] Although Antony was enamored of Cleopatra, for the sake of ambition he married Octavia, the sister of Augustus Cæsar. When defeated by Augustus he took his own life by falling on his sword. See Shakspere, *Antony and Cleopatra.*

I sold—and on to Venice rushed. How long
That dreary never-ending journey seemed!
I cursed the hills, up which we slowly dragged,
The long flat plains of Lombardy I cursed,
With files of poplars stretching out and out,
That kept me back from Venice—but at last
In a black gondola I swam along
The sea-built city, and my heart was big
With the glad thought that I was near to him.
Yes! gladness came upon me that soft night,
And jealousy was hushed and hope led on
My dancing heart. One little half-hour more
And I should be again within his arms;
And how he'd be surprised to see me here,
And laugh at me. In vain I strove to curb
My glad impatience,—I must see him then,
At once, that very night—I could not wait
The tardy morning—'twas a year away.—
I only gave the gondolier his name,
And said, 'You know him?' 'Yes.' 'Then row me quick
To where he is.' He bowed, and on we went
Threading along the grand canal so swift
The oar sprang to the pressure of his arm;
And as we swept along, I leaned me out
And dragged my burning fingers in the wave,
My hurried heart forecasting to itself
Our meeting—what he'd say, and do, and think,
How I should hang upon his neck, and say,
'I could not longer live without you, dear.'—
In thought like this, I had no heart to list
The idle babbling of a gondolier;
I bade him not to talk, but—row—row—row!

At last he paused, stretched out his hand, and said,
'There is the palace.' I was struck aghast—
It flared with lights that from the windows streamed
And trickled down into the black canal—
Faint bursts of music swelled from out the doors—
A swarm of gondolas close huddling thronged
Around the oozy steps. 'Stop! Stop!' I cried,
For a wild doubt rushed swiftly through my mind,
That scared me—like a strange noise in a wood
A traveler hears at night,—''Tis some mistake;
Why are these lights? This palace is not his,
He owns no palace.' 'Pardon,' answered he,
'I fancied the Signora wished to see
The marriage festa—and all Venice knows
The bride receives tonight.' 'What bride, whose bride?'
I snapped impatient. 'Count Alberti's bride,
Whose else?' he answered with a shrug. My heart
From its glad singing height dropped like a lark
Shot dead, at those few words. The whole world reeled,
And for a moment I was stunned and crushed;
Then came the wild revulsion of despair;
Then calm more dreadful than the fiercest pain.
'Row to the steps,' I said. He rowed. I leaped
On their wet edge, and stared in at the door,
Where all was hurry, hum, and buzz, and light.
I was so calm—I never was so calm
As then, despairing. Yet one little jet
Of hope was stirring in that stagnant marsh—
That little jet was all that troubled me—
My eyes ran lightning zigzag through the crowd
In search of him—he was not there—Ah, God!
I breathed—he was not there—I inly cursed
My unbelief, and turned me round to go—
There was a sudden murmur near the door,
And I beheld him walking at her side.
Oh! cursed be the hour I saw that sight,
And cursed be the place!—I saw those eyes,
That used to look such passion into mine,
Turned with the self-same look to other eyes
That upward gazed at his—yes, light blue eyes,
Just like Beata's—hers were light blue eyes!—
I saw her smiling—saw him smiling too,
As they advanced—I could not bear her bliss;

My heart stood still, and all the hurrying crowd
Seemed spectral, nothing lived but those two forms;
The Past all broke to pieces with a crash
That stunned me, shattering every power of thought:
I scarcely know what happened then—I know
I felt for the stiletto in my vest,
With purpose that was half mechanical,
As if a demon used my hand for his,
I heard the red blood singing in my brain,
I struck—before me at my feet she fell.

Who was the queen then? Ah! your rank and wealth,
Your pearls and splendors, what did they avail
Against the sharp stiletto's little point?
You should have thought of that before you dared—
You, who had all the world beside—to steal
The only treasure that the Roman girl,
The poor despised black peasant, ever had;
You will not smile again, as then you smiled,—
Thank God! you'll never smile again for him.
And I alone of all the crowd stood calm;
I was avenged—avenged until I saw
The dreadful look he gave me as he turned
From her dead face and looked in mine—Ah, God!
It haunts me, scares me, will not let me sleep.

'When will he come, and tell me he forgives
And loves me still? Oh, Father! bid him come,
Come quickly—come and let me die in peace.
Tell him I could not help it, I was mad,
But I repent, I suffer,—he at least
Should pity and forgive. Oh! make him come
And say he loves me, and then let me die.
I shall be ready then to die—but now
I cannot think of God; my heart is hell,
Is hell, until I know he loves me still.

1855 1856

THOMAS WILLIAM PARSONS

Born, Boston, 1819, died, Scituate, Massachusetts, 1892. He was educated in Boston and was in Italy from 1836 to 1843 studying Italian literature. He afterwards practiced dentistry in Boston and in London. His chief literary works are *Translation of Dante's Inferno* 1843-1867; *Ghetto di Roma*, 1854; *The Shadow of the Obelisk and Other Poems*, 1872. Other Dante translations appeared in 1893 together with a final edition of his poems.

ON A BUST OF DANTE

See, from this counterfeit of him
Whom Arno shall remember long,
How stern of lineament, how grim,
The father was of Tuscan song:
There but the burning sense of wrong,
Perpetual care and scorn, abide;
Small friendship for the lordly throng,
Distrust of all the world beside.

Faithful if this wan image be,
No dream his life was, but a fight;
Could any Beatrice[1] see
A lover in that anchorite?
To that cold Ghibeline's gloomy sight[2]
Who could have guessed the visions came
Of Beauty, veiled with heavenly light
In circles of eternal flame?

The lips as Cumæ's[3] cavern close,
The cheeks with fast and sorrow thin,
The rigid front, almost morose
But for the patient hope within,
Declare a life whose course hath been
Unsullied still, though still severe,
Which, through the wavering days of sin,
Kept itself icy-chaste and clear.

Not wholly such his haggard look
When wandering once, forlorn, he strayed
With no companion save his book
To Corvo's hushed monastic shade;
Where, as the Benedictine laid
His palm upon the pilgrim guest,
The single boon for which he prayed
The convent's charity was rest.[4]

Peace dwells not here—this rugged face
Betrays no spirit of repose;
The sullen warrior sole we trace,
The marble man of many woes.
Such was his mien when first arose
The thought of that strange tale divine

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[1] The beloved of Dante who is his guide in th *Paradiso*.

[2] Dante belonged to the political party calle Ghibellines.

[3] The Cumæan sibyl was one of the most renowned of prophetesses.

[4] A letter whose authenticity has been questioned written by "Frate Ilario, a humble monk o Corvo," relates that when Dante, unknown visited the monastery, "I questioned him o what he wanted—thereat he looked round a me and the brethren who were with me an answered, 'Peace.' "

When hell he peopled with his foes,[5]
The scourge of many a guilty line.

War to the last he waged with all
The tyrant canker-worms of earth;
Baron and duke, in hold and hall,
Cursed the dark hour that gave him birth;
He used Rome's harlot for his mirth;
Plucked bare hypocrisy and crime;
But valiant souls of knightly worth
Transmitted to the rolls of Time.

O, Time, whose verdicts mock our own,
The only righteous judge art thou:
That poor old exile, sad and lone,
Is Latium's[6] other VIRGIL now;
Before his name the nations bow:
His words are parcel of mankind,
Deep in whose hearts, as on his brow,
The marks have sunk of DANTE's mind.

1854

JULIA WARD HOWE

Born, New York City, 1819, died, South Portsmouth, Rhode Island, 1910. Born of wealthy parents, and marrying a physician whose chief work was in the interests of the blind and the mentally deficient, Mrs. Howe's environment and circumstances led her to philanthropy almost as a career. She was active in the anti-slavery movement and later in the work for woman suffrage. Her best known writings aside from collections of poems published in 1854, 1857, and 1866 are *Life of Margaret Fuller,* 1883; *Reminiscences,* 1899.

BATTLE-HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword;
His truth is marching on.

I have seen him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel, writ in burnished rows of steel:
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before his judgment-seat;
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me:
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.

1861 1862

EDWARD EVERETT HALE

Born, Boston, 1822, died, Roxbury, Massachusetts, 1909. He graduated at Harvard, 1839, studied theology, entered the Unitarian ministry in 1846, and from 1856 until his death was pastor and pastor emeritus of the South Congregational (Unitarian) Church, Boston. He was a frequent contributor to magazines and newspapers, and to historical compilations. Among his books are *Sketches of Christian History,* 1850; *The Man without a Country and Other Tales,* 1868; *Ten Times One is Ten,* 1870; *In His Name,* 1873; *Philip Nolan's Friends,* 1876; *Life of George Washington,* 1888; *James Russell Lowell and his Friends,* 1899; *A New England Boyhood,* 1893.

THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY[1]

I suppose that very few casual readers of the *"New York Herald"* of August 13th [1863] observed, in an obscure corner, among the "Deaths," the announcement,—

"NOLAN. Died on board U. S. Corvette Levant, Lat. 2° 11′ S., Long. 131° W., on the 11th of May, PHILIP NOLAN."

I happened to observe it, because I was stranded at the old Mission House in Mackinac, waiting for a Lake Superior steamer which did not choose to come, and I was devouring to the very stubble all the current literature I could get hold of, even down to the deaths and marriages in the *Herald.* My memory for names and people is good, and the reader will see, as he goes on, that I had reason enough to remember Philip Nolan. There are hundreds of readers who would have paused at that announcement, if the officer of the *Levant* who reported it had chosen to make it thus: "Died, May 11th, THE MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY." For it was as "The Man without a Country" that poor Philip Nolan had generally been known by the officers who had him in charge during some fifty years, as, indeed, by all the men who sailed under them. I dare say there is many a man who has taken wine with him once a fortnight, in a three years' cruise, who never knew that his name was "Nolan," or whether the poor wretch had any name at all.

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[5] In the *Inferno,* Dante finds in hell among the foes of righteousness many of his own enemies.

[6] Italy's

[1] This story was written "in the darkest period of the Civil War to show what love of country is." Philip Nolan was an entirely fictitious character. "Frederic Ingham, the 'I' of the narrative, is supposed to be a retired officer of the United States Navy." (See Hale's note in the edition copyrighted by Messrs. Little, Brown and Company, 1898.)

There can now be no possible harm in telling this poor creature's story. Reason enough there has been till now, ever since Madison's administration went out in 1817, for very strict secrecy, the secrecy of honor itself, among the gentlemen of the navy who have had Nolan in successive charge. And certainly it speaks well for the *esprit de corps* of the profession, and the personal honor of its members, that to the press this man's story has been wholly unknown,—and, I think, to the country at large also. I have reason to think, from some investigations I made in the Naval Archives when I was attached to the Bureau of Construction, that every official report relating to him was burned when Ross[2] burned the public buildings at Washington. One of the Tuckers, or possibly one of the Watsons, had Nolan in charge at the end of the war; and when, on returning from his cruise, he reported at Washington to one of the Crowninshields,—who was in the Navy Department when he came home,—he found that the Department ignored the whole business. Whether they really knew nothing about it, or whether it was a "*Non mi ricordo,*"[3] determined on as a piece of policy, I do not know. But this I do know, that since 1817, and possibly before, no naval officer has mentioned Nolan in his report of a cruise.

But, as I say, there is no need for secrecy any longer. And now the poor creature is dead, it seems to me worth while to tell a little of his story, by way of showing young Americans of today what it is to be A MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY.

PHILIP NOLAN was as fine a young officer as there was in the "Legion of the West," as the Western division of our army was then called. When Aaron Burr[4] made his first dashing expedition down to New Orleans in 1805, at Fort Massac, or somewhere above on the river, he met, as the Devil would have it, this gay, dashing, bright young fellow; at some dinner-party, I think. Burr marked him, talked to him, walked with him, took him a day or two's voyage in his flat-boat, and, in short, fascinated him. For the next year, barrack-life was very tame to poor Nolan. He occasionally availed himself of the permission the great man had given him to write to him. Long, high-worded, stilted letters the poor boy wrote and rewrote and copied. But never a line did he have in reply from the gay deceiver. The other boys in the garrison sneered at him, because he sacrificed in this unrequited affection for a politician the time which they devoted to Monongahela, sledge, and high-low-jack. Bourbon, euchre, and poker were still unknown. But one day Nolan had his revenge. This time Burr came down the river, not as an attorney seeking a place for his office, but as a disguised conqueror. He had defeated I know not how many district-attorneys; he had dined at I know not how many public dinners; he had been heralded in I know not how many *Weekly Arguses,* and it was rumored that he had an army behind him and an empire before him. It was a great day—his arrival—to poor Nolan. Burr had not been at the fort an hour before he sent for him. That evening he asked Nolan to take him out in his skiff to show him a cane-brake or a cotton-wood tree, as he said,—really to seduce him; and by the time the sail was over, Nolan was enlisted body and soul. From that time, though he did not yet know it, he lived as A MAN WITHOUT A COUNTRY.

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[2] Robert Ross, 1766-1814, a British general, captured Washington in 1814 and before evacuating the city burned the public buildings.

[3] "I do not remember."

[4] Aaron Burr, who had been elected Vice-President of the United States in 1800, had lost his influence by 1804 and was then defeated in his effort to become Governor of New York. Angered by Alexander Hamilton's open stand against him, he challenged Hamilton to a duel and killed him. His reputation ruined, Burr now desperate, conceived the idea of founding a republic of which he himself should be president, which should include Texas and perhaps Mexico, and have New Orleans as its capital. He visited the West, secured a large tract of land on the Washita River, and was known to have been in correspondence with the British and Spanish ministers at Washington. He was indicted for treason at Richmond, Virginia, May, 1807, but from lack of sufficient evidence he was acquitted.

What Burr meant to do I know no more than you, dear reader. It is none of our business just now. Only, when the grand catastrophe came, and Jefferson and the House of Virginia[5] of that day undertook to break on the wheel all the possible Clarences of the then House of York, by the great treason trial at Richmond, some of the lesser fry in that distant Mississippi Valley, which was farther from us than Puget's Sound is today, introduced the like novelty on their provincial stage; and, to while away the monotony of the summer at Fort Adams, got up, for *spectacles,* a string of court-martials on the officers there. One and another of the colonels and majors were tried, and, to fill out the list, little Nolan, against whom, Heaven knows, there was evidence enough,—that he was sick of the service, had been willing to be false to it, and would have obeyed any order to march anywhither with any one who would follow him had the order only been signed, "By command of His Exc. A. Burr." The courts dragged on. The big flies escaped,—rightly for all I know. Nolan was proved guilty enough, as I say; yet you and I would never have heard of him, reader, but that, when the president of the court asked him at the close whether he wished to say anything to show that he had always been faithful to the United States, he cried out, in a fit of frenzy,—

"D—n the United States! I wish I may never hear of the United States again!"

I suppose he did not know how the words shocked old Colonel Morgan,[6] who was holding the court. Half the officers who sat in it had served through the Revolution, and their lives, not to say their necks, had been risked for the very idea which he so cavalierly cursed in his madness. He, on his part, had grown up in the West of those days, in the midst of "Spanish plot," "Orleans plot," and all the rest.[7] He had been educated on a plantation where the finest company was a Spanish officer or a French merchant from Orleans. His education, such as it was, had been perfected in commercial expeditions to Vera Cruz, and I think he told me his father once hired an Englishman to be a private tutor for a winter on the plantation. He had spent half his youth with an older brother, hunting horses in Texas; and, in a word, to him "United States" was scarcely a reality. Yet he had been fed by "United States" for all the years since he had been in the army. He had sworn on his faith as a Christian to be true to "United States." It was "United States" which gave him the uniform he wore, and the sword by his side. Nay, my poor Nolan, it was only because "United States" had picked you out first as one of her own confidential men of honor that "A. Burr" cared for you a straw more than for the flat-boat men who sailed his ark for him. I do not excuse Nolan; I only explain to the reader why he damned his country, and wished he might never hear her name again.

He never did hear her name but once again. From that moment, September 23, 1807, till the day he died, May 11, 1863, he never heard her name again. For that half century and more he was a man without a country.

Old Morgan, as I said, was terribly shocked. If Nolan had compared George Washington to Benedict Arnold, or had cried, "God save King George," Morgan would not have felt worse. He called the court into his private room, and returned in fifteen minutes, with a face like a sheet, to say,—

"Prisoner, hear the sentence of the Court! The Court decides, subject to the approval of the President, that you never hear the name of the United States again."

Nolan laughed. But nobody else laughed. Old Morgan was too solemn, and the whole room was hushed dead as night for a minute. Even Nolan lost his swagger in a moment. Then Morgan added,—

"Mr. Marshal, take the prisoner to Orleans in an armed boat, and deliver him to the naval commander there."

The marshal gave his orders and the prisoner was taken out of court.

"Mr. Marshal," continued old Morgan, "see that no one mentions the United States to the prisoner. Mr. Marshal, make my respects to Lieutenant Mitchell at Orleans, and request him to order that no one shall mention the United States to the prisoner while he is on board ship. You will receive your written orders from the officer on duty here this evening. The Court is adjourned without day."

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[5] As in the Wars of the Roses the houses of York and Lancaster were rivals, so, Hale implies, the Virginia statesmen regarded the statesmen of New York as their natural enemies. George, Duke of Clarence, was murdered in the Tower of London, where he had been imprisoned for treason.

[6] "Colonel Morgan is a fictitious character, like all the others in this book except Aaron Burr." (Hale's note, in the edition copyrighted 1898 by Messrs. Little, Brown and Company.)

[7] The years following our Revolution were marked by plots of the Mississippi valley settlers to gain possession of the mouth of the Mississippi, then held by Spain.

I have always supposed that Colonel Morgan himself took the proceedings of the court to Washington City, and explained them to Mr. Jefferson. Certain it is that the President approved them,—certain, that is, if I may believe the men who say they have seen his signature. Before the *Nautilus* got round from New Orleans to the northern Atlantic coast with the prisoner on board, the sentence had been approved, and he was a man without a country.

The plan then adopted was substantially the same which was necessarily followed ever after. Perhaps it was suggested by the necessity of sending him by water from Fort Adams and Orleans. The Secretary of the Navy—it must have been the first Crowninshield, though he is a man I do not remember—was requested to put Nolan on board a government vessel bound on a long cruise, and to direct that he should be only so far confined there as to make it certain that he never saw or heard of the country. We had few long cruises then, and the navy was very much out of favor; and as almost all of this story is traditional, as I have explained, I do not know certainly what his first cruise was. But the commander to whom he was entrusted,—perhaps it was Tingey or Shaw, though I think it was one of the younger men,—we are all old enough now,—regulated the etiquette and the precautions of the affair, and according to his scheme they were carried out, I suppose, till Nolan died.

When I was second officer of the *Intrepid,* some thirty years after, I saw the original paper of instructions. I have been sorry ever since that I did not copy the whole of it. It ran, however, much in this way:—

"WASHINGTON (with a date, which
must have been late in 1807).

"Sir,—You will receive from Lieutenant Neale the person of Philip Nolan, late a lieutenant in the United States army.

"This person on his trial by court-martial expressed, with an oath, the wish that he might 'never hear of the United States again.'

"The Court sentenced him to have his wish fulfilled.

"For the present, the execution of the order is entrusted by the President to this Department.

"You will take the prisoner on board your ship, and keep him there with such precautions as shall prevent his escape.

"You will provide him with such quarters, rations, and clothing as would be proper for an officer of his late rank, if he were a passenger on your vessel on the business of his Government.

"The gentlemen on board will make any arrangements agreeable to themselves regarding his society. He is to be exposed to no indignity of any kind, nor is he ever unnecessarily to be reminded that he is a prisoner.

"But under no circumstances is he ever to hear of his country or to see any information regarding it; and you will specially caution all the officers under your command to take care, that, in the various indulgences which may be granted, this rule, in which his punishment is involved, shall not be broken.

"It is the intention of the Government that he shall never again see the country which he has disowned. Before the end of your cruise you will receive orders which will give effect to this intention.

"Respectfully yours,
"W. SOUTHARD, for the
"Secretary of the Navy."

If I had only preserved the whole of this paper, there would be no break in the beginning of my sketch of this story. For Captain Shaw, if it was he, handed it to his successor in the charge, and he to his, and I suppose the commander of the *Levant* has it today as his authority for keeping this man in this mild custody.

The rule adopted on board the ships on which I have met "the man without a country" was, I think, transmitted from the beginning. No mess liked to have him permanently, because his presence cut off all talk of home or of the prospect of return, of politics or letters, of peace or of war,—cut off more than half the talk men like to have at sea. But it was always thought too hard that he should never meet the rest of us, except to touch hats, and we finally sank into one system. He was not permitted to talk with the men, unless an officer was by. With officers he had unrestrained intercourse, as far as they and he chose. But he grew shy, though he had favorites: I was one. Then the captain always asked him to dinner on Monday. Every mess in succession took up the invitation in its turn. According to the size of the ship, you had him at your mess more or less often at dinner. His breakfast he ate in his own state-room,—he always had a state-room,—which was where a sentinel or somebody on the watch could see the door. And whatever else he ate or drank, he ate or drank alone. Sometimes, when the marines or sailors had any special jollification, they were permitted to invite "Plain-Buttons," as they called him. Then Nolan was sent with some officer, and the men were forbidden to speak of home while he was there. I believe the theory was that the sight of his punishment did them good. They called him "Plain-Buttons," because, while he always chose to wear a regulation army-uniform, he was not permitted to wear the army-button, for the reason that it bore either the initials or the insignia of the country he had disowned.

I remember, soon after I joined the navy, I was on shore with some of the older officers from our ship and from the *Brandywine,* which we had met at Alexandria. We had leave to make a party and go up to Cairo and the Pyramids. As we jogged along (you went on donkeys then), some of the gentlemen (we boys called them "Dons," but the phrase was long since changed) fell to talking about Nolan, and some one told the system which was adopted from the first about his books and other reading. As he was almost never permitted to go on shore, even though the vessel lay in port for months, his time at the best hung heavy; and everybody was permitted to lend him books, if they were not published in America and made no allusion to it. These were common enough in the old days, when people in the other hemisphere talked of the United States as little as we do of Paraguay. He had almost all the foreign papers that came into the ship, sooner or later; only somebody must go over them first, and cut out any advertisement or stray paragraph that alluded to America. This was a little cruel sometimes, when the back of what was cut out might be as innocent as Hesiod.[8] Right in the midst of one of Napoleon's battles, or one of Canning's[9] speeches, poor Nolan would find a great hole, because on the back of the page of that paper there had been an advertisement of a packet for New York, or a scrap from the President's message. I say this was the first time I ever heard of this plan, which afterwards I had enough and more than enough to do with. I remember it, because poor Phillips, who was of the party, as soon as the allusion to reading was made, told a story of something which happened at the Cape of Good Hope on Nolan's first voyage; and it is the only thing I ever knew of that voyage. They had touched at the Cape, and had done the civil thing with the English Admiral and the fleet, and then, leaving for a long cruise up the Indian Ocean, Phillips had borrowed a lot of English books from an officer, which, in those days, as indeed in these, was quite a windfall. Among them, as the Devil would order, was the *Lay of the Last Minstrel,* which they had all of them heard of, but which most of them had never seen. I think it could not have been published long. Well, nobody thought there could be any risk of anything national in that, though Phillips swore old Shaw had cut out *The Tempest* from Shakspere before he let Nolan have it, because he said "the Bermudas ought to be ours, and, by Jove, should be one day." So Nolan was permitted to join the circle one afternoon when a lot of them sat on deck smoking and reading aloud. People do not do such things so often now; but when I was young we got rid of a great deal of time so. Well, so it happened that in his turn Nolan took the book and read to the others; and he read very well, as I know. Nobody in the circle knew a line of the poem, only it was all magic and Border chivalry, and was ten thousand years ago. Poor Nolan read steadily through the fifth canto, stopped a minute and drank something, and then began, without a thought of what was coming,—

Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,—

It seems impossible to us that anybody ever heard this for the first time; but all these fellows did then, and poor Nolan himself went on, still unconsciously or mechanically,—

This is my own, my native land!

Then they all saw something was to pay; but he expected to get through, I suppose, turned a little pale, but plunged on,—

Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned
From wandering on a foreign strand?—
If such there breathe, go, mark him well,—

By this time the men were all beside themselves, wishing there was any way to make him turn over two pages; but he had not quite presence of mind for that; he gagged a little, colored crimson, and staggered on,—

For him no minstrel raptures swell;
High though his titles, proud his name,
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim,
Despite these titles, power, and pelf,
The wretch, concentered all in self,—

and here the poor fellow choked, could not go on, but started up, swung the book into the sea, vanished into his state-room, "And by Jove," said Phillips, "we did not see him for two months again. And I had to make up some beggarly story to that English surgeon why I did not return his Walter Scott to him."

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[8] A Greek poet of probably the eighth century B. C.

[9] George Canning, 1770-1827, was a celebrated English statesman and orator.

That story shows about the time when Nolan's braggadocio must have broken down. At first, they said, he took a very high tone, considered his imprisonment a mere farce, affected to enjoy the voyage, and all that; but Phillips said that after he came out of his state-room he never was the same man again. He never read aloud again, unless it was the Bible or Shakspere, or something else he was sure of. But it was not that merely. He never entered in with the other young men exactly as a companion again. He was always shy afterwards, when I knew him,—very seldom spoke, unless he was spoken to, except to a very few friends. He lighted up occasionally,—I remember late in his life hearing him fairly eloquent on something which had been suggested to him by one of Fléchier's[10] sermons, —but generally he had the nervous, tired look of a heart-wounded man.

When Captain Shaw was coming home,—if, as I say, it was Shaw,—rather to the surprise of everybody they made one of the Windward Islands, and lay off and on for nearly a week. The boys said the officers were sick of salt-junk, and meant to have turtle-soup before they came home. But after several days the *Warren* came to the same rendezvous; they exchanged signals; she sent to Phillips and these homeward-bound men letters and papers, and told them she was outward-bound, perhaps to the Mediterranean, and took poor Nolan and his traps on the boat back to try his second cruise. He looked very blank when he was told to get ready to join her. He had known enough of the signs of the sky to know that till that moment he was going "home." But this was a distinct evidence of something he had not thought of, perhaps,—that there was no going home for him, even to a prison. And this was the first of some twenty such transfers, which brought him sooner or later into half our best vessels, but which kept him all his life at least some hundred miles from the country he had hoped he might never hear of again.

It may have been on that second cruise,—it was once when he was up the Mediterranean,—that Mrs. Graff, the celebrated Southern beauty of those days, danced with him. They had been lying a long time in the Bay of Naples, and the officers were very intimate in the English fleet, and there had been great festivities, and our men thought they must give a great ball on board the ship. How they ever did it on board the *Warren* I am sure I do not know. Perhaps it was not the *Warren*, or perhaps ladies did not take up so much room as they do now. They wanted to use Nolan's state-room for something, and they hated to do it without asking him to the ball; so the captain said they might ask him, if they would be responsible that he did not talk with the wrong people, "who would give him intelligence." So the dance went on, the finest party that had ever been known, I dare say; for I never heard of a man-of-war ball that was not. For ladies they had the family of the American consul, one or two travelers who had adventured so far, and a nice bevy of English girls and matrons, perhaps Lady Hamilton[11] herself.

Well, different officers relieved each other in standing and talking with Nolan in a friendly way, so as to be sure that nobody else spoke to him. The dancing went on with spirit, and after a while even the fellows who took this honorary guard of Nolan ceased to fear any *contretemps*.[12] Only when some English lady—Lady Hamilton, as I said, perhaps—called for a set of "American dances," an odd thing happened. Everybody then danced contra-dances. The black band, nothing loath, conferred as to what "American dances" were, and started off with "Virginia Reel," which they followed with "Money-Musk," which, in its turn in those days, should have been followed by "The Old Thirteen." But just as Dick, the leader, tapped for his fiddles to begin, and bent forward, about to say, in true negro state, "'The Old Thirteen,' gentlemen and ladies!" as he had said "'Virginny Reel,' if you please!" and "'Money-Musk,' if you please!" the captain's boy tapped him on the shoulder, whispered to him, and he did not announce the name of the dance; he merely bowed, began on the air, and they all fell to,—the officers teaching the English girls the figure, but not telling them why it had no name.

But that is not the story I started to tell. —As the dancing went on, Nolan and our fellows all got at ease, as I said,—so much so, that it seemed quite natural for him to bow to that splendid Mrs. Graff, and say,—

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[10] Esprit Fléchier, 1632-1710, a French bishop, noted for his pulpit eloquence.

[11] A celebrated beauty and diplomatic intriguer, wife of Sir William Hamilton, the diplomatist and archaeologist, who was ambassador at Naples, 1764-1800.

[12] mishap, mischance

"I hope you have not forgotten me, Miss Rutledge. Shall I have the honor of dancing?"

He did it so quickly, that Shubrick, who was with him, could not hinder him. She laughed and said,—

"I am not Miss Rutledge any longer, Mr. Nolan; but I will dance all the same," just nodded to Shubrick, as if to say he must leave Mr. Nolan to her, and led him off to the place where the dance was forming.

Nolan thought he had got his chance. He had known her at Philadelphia, and at other places had met her, and this was a godsend. You could not talk in contra-dances, as you do in cotillions, or even in the pauses of waltzing; but there were chances for tongues and sounds, as well as for eyes and blushes. He began with her travels, and Europe, and Vesuvius, and the French; and then, when they had worked down, and had that long talking time at the bottom of the set, he said boldly,—a little pale, she said, as she told me the story years after,—

"And what do you hear from home, Mrs. Graff?"

And that splendid creature looked through him. Jove! how she must have looked through him!

"Home!! Mr. Nolan!!! I thought you were the man who never wanted to hear of home again!"—and she walked directly up the deck to her husband, and left poor Nolan alone, as he always was.—He did not dance again.

I cannot give any history of him in order; nobody can now; and, indeed, I am not trying to. These are the traditions, which I sort out, as I believe them, from the myths which have been told about this man for forty years. The lies that have been told about him are legion. The fellows used to say he was the "Iron Mask";[13] and poor George Pons went to his grave in the belief that this was the author of "Junius,"[14] who was being punished for his celebrated libel on Thomas Jefferson. Pons was not very strong in the historical line. A happier story than either of these I have told is of the war.[15] That came along soon after. I have heard this affair told in three or four ways,—and, indeed, it may have happened more than once. But which ship it was on I cannot tell. However, in one, at least, of the great frigate-duels with the English, in which the navy was really baptized, it happened that a round shot from the enemy entered one of our ports square, and took right down the officer of the gun himself, and almost every man of the gun's crew. Now you may say what you choose about courage, but that is not a nice thing to see. But, as the men who were not killed picked themselves up, and as they and the surgeon's people were carrying off the bodies, there appeared Nolan, in his shirt-sleeves, with the rammer in his hand, and, just as if he had been the officer, told them off with authority,—who should go to the cock-pit with the wounded men, who should stay with him,—perfectly cheery, and with that way which makes men feel sure all is right and is going to be right. And he finished loading the gun with his own hands, aimed it, and bade the men fire. And there he stayed, captain of that gun, keeping those fellows in spirits, till the enemy struck,—sitting on the carriage while the gun was cooling, though he was exposed all the time, —showing them easier ways to handle heavy shot,—making the raw hands laugh at their own blunders,—and when the gun cooled again, getting it loaded and fired twice as often as any other gun on the ship. The captain walked forward by way of encouraging the men, and Nolan touched his hat and said,—

"I am showing them how we do this in the artillery, sir."

And this is the part of the story where all the legends agree: that Commodore said,—

"I see you do, and I thank you, sir; and I shall never forget this day, sir, and you never shall, sir."

And after the whole thing was over, and he had the Englishman's sword, in the midst of the state and ceremony of the quarter-deck, he said,—

"Where is Mr. Nolan? Ask Mr. Nolan to come here."

And when Nolan came, the captain said,—

"Mr. Nolan, we are all very grateful to you today; you are one of us today; you will be named in the despatches."

And then the old man took off his own sword of ceremony, and gave it to Nolan, and made him put it on. The man told me this who saw it. Nolan cried like a baby, and well he might. He had not worn a sword since that infernal day at Fort Adams. But always afterwards on occasions of ceremony, he wore that quaint old French sword of the Commodore's.

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[13] A French prisoner of state in the Bastile who from 1673 (?) until his death in 1703 wore a mask which tradition made iron. It is not positively known who he was.

[14] The unknown writer of a series of letters against the English Government, which appeared in London papers from November, 1768, to January, 1772.

[15] Of 1812.

The captain did mention him in the despatches. It was always said he asked that he might be pardoned. He wrote a special letter to the Secretary of War. But nothing ever came of it. As I said, that was about the time when they began to ignore the whole transaction at Washington, and when Nolan's imprisonment began to carry itself on because there was nobody to stop it without any new orders from home.

I have heard it said that he was with Porter[16] when he took possession of the Nukahiwa Islands. Not this Porter, you know, but old Porter, his father, Essex Porter,—that is, the old *Essex* Porter, not this *Essex*. As an artillery officer, who had seen service in the West, Nolan knew more about fortifications, embrasures, ravelins,[17] stockades, and all that, than any of them did; and he worked with a right good-will in fixing that battery all right. I have always thought it was a pity Porter did not leave him in command there with Gamble. That would have settled all the question about his punishment. We should have kept the islands, and at this moment we should have one station in the Pacific Ocean. Our French friends, too, when they wanted this little watering-place, would have found it was preoccupied.[18] But Madison and the Virginians, of course, flung all that away.

All that was near fifty years ago. If Nolan was thirty then, he must have been near eighty when he died. He looked sixty when he was forty. But he never seemed to me to change a hair afterwards. As I imagine his life, from what I have seen and heard of it, he must have been in every sea, and yet almost never on land. He must have known, in a formal way, more officers in our service than any man living knows. He told me once, with a grave smile, that no man in the world lived so methodical a life as he. "You know the boys say I am the Iron Mask, and you know how busy he was." He said it did not do for any one to try to read all the time, more than to do anything else all the time; and that he read just five hours a day. "Then," he said, "I keep up my notebooks, writing in them at such and such hours from what I have been reading; and I include in these my scrap-books." These were very curious indeed. He had six or eight, of different subjects. There was one of History, one of Natural Science, one which he called "Odds and Ends." But they were not merely books of extracts from newspapers. They had bits of plants and ribbons, shells tied on, and carved scraps of bone and wood, which he had taught the men to cut for him, and they were beautifully illustrated. He drew admirably. He had some of the funniest drawings there, and some of the most pathetic, that I have ever seen in my life. I wonder who will have Nolan's scrap-books.

Well, he said his reading and his notes were his profession, and that they took five hours and two hours respectively of each day. "Then," said he, "every man should have a diversion as well as a profession. My Natural History is my diversion." That took two hours a day more. The men used to bring him birds and fish, but on a long cruise he had to satisfy himself with centipedes and cockroaches and such small game. He was the only naturalist I ever met who knew anything about the habits of the house-fly and the mosquito. All those people can tell you whether they are *Lepidoptera* or *Steptopotera*;[19] but as for telling how you can get rid of them, or how they get away from you when you strike them,—why Linnæus[20] knew as little of that as John Foy the idiot did. These nine hours made Nolan's regular daily "occupation." The rest of the time he talked or walked. Till he grew very old, he went aloft a great deal. He always kept up his exercise; and I never heard that he was ill. If any other man was ill, he was the kindest nurse in the world; and he knew more than half the surgeons do. Then if anybody was sick or died, or if the captain wanted him to, on any other occasion, he was always ready to read prayers. I have remarked that he read beautifully.

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[16] David Porter, 1780-1843, commander of the American man-of-war *Essex* in the war of 1812. In 1813 he took formal possession of the Marquesas Islands, in the Pacific, the largest of which is Nukahiva. These, however, the American Government did not seem to consider worth endeavoring to hold. David Porter's son, David Dixon Porter, "this Porter," 1813-1891, was an admiral in the Civil War. Or, reference may be to Commodore William David Porter, who commanded the gunboat *Essex* on western rivers during the Civil War.

[17] An outwork of a fortification, having two faces forming a salient angle.

[18] The French took possession of the Marquesas Islands in 1842.

[19] *Lepidoptera* are insects distinguished primarily by their having four membraneous wings. *Steptopotera:* perhaps a nonce-word.

[20] The famous Swedish naturalist, 1707-1778. John Foy is the chief character in Wordsworth's poem, *The Idiot Boy.*

My own acquaintance with Philip Nolan began six or eight years after the war, on my first voyage after I was appointed a midshipman. It was in the first days after our Slave-Trade treaty,[21] while the Reigning House, which was still the House of Virginia, had still a sort of sentimentalism about the suppression of the horrors of the Middle Passage, and something was sometimes done that way. We were in the South Atlantic on that business. From the time I joined, I believe I thought Nolan was a sort of lay chaplain,—a chaplain with a blue coat. I never asked about him. Everything in the ship was strange to me. I knew it was green to ask questions, and I suppose I thought there was a "Plain-Buttons" on every ship. We had him to dine in our mess once a week, and the caution was given that on that day nothing was to be said about home. But if they had told us not to say anything about the planet Mars or the book of *Deuteronomy,* I should not have asked why; there were a great many things which seemed to me to have as little reason. I first came to understand anything about "the man without a country" one day when we overhauled a dirty little schooner which had slaves on board. An officer was sent to take charge of her, and, after a few minutes, he sent back his boat to ask that some one might be sent him who could speak Portuguese. We were all looking over the rail when the message came, and we all wished we could interpret, when the captain asked who spoke Portuguese. But none of the officers did; and just as the captain was sending forward to ask if any of the people could, Nolan stepped out and said he should be glad to interpret, if the captain wished, as he understood the language. The captain thanked him, fitted out another boat with him, and in this boat it was my luck to go.

When we got there, it was such a scene as you seldom see, and never want to. Nastiness beyond account, and chaos run loose in the midst of the nastiness. There were not a great many of the negroes; but by way of making what there were understand that they were free, Vaughan had had their hand-cuffs and ankle-cuffs knocked off, and, for convenience' sake, was putting them upon the rascals of the schooner's crew. The negroes were, most of them, out of the hold, and swarming all round the dirty deck, with a central throng surrounding Vaughan and addressing him in every dialect, and *patois* of a dialect, from the Zulu click up to the Parisian of Beledeljereed.[22]

As we came on deck, Vaughan looked down from a hogshead, on which he had mounted in desperation, and said:—

"For God's love, is there anybody who can make these wretches understand something? The men gave them rum, and that did not quiet them. I knocked that big fellow down twice, and that did not soothe him. And then I talked Choctaw to all of them together; and I'll be hanged if they understand that as well as they understood the English."

Nolan said he could speak Portuguese, and one or two fine-looking Kroomen[23] were dragged out, who, as it had been found already, had worked for the Portuguese on the coast at Fernando Po.

"Tell them they are free," said Vaughan; "and tell them that these rascals are to be hanged as soon as we can get rope enough."

Nolan "put that into Spanish,"—that is, he explained it in such Portuguese as the Kroomen could understand, and they in turn to such of the negroes as could understand them. Then there was such a yell of delight, clinching of fists, leaping and dancing, kissing of Nolan's feet, and a general rush made to the hogshead by way of spontaneous worship of Vaughan, as the *deus ex machina*[24] of the occasion.

"Tell them," said Vaughan, well pleased, "that I will take them all to Cape Palmas."

This did not answer so well. Cape Palmas was practically as far from the homes of most of them as New Orleans or Rio Janeiro was; that is, they would be eternally separated from home there. And their interpreters, as we could understand, instantly said, *"Ah, non Palmas,"* and began to propose infinite other expedients in most voluble language. Vaughan was rather disappointed at this result of his liberality, and asked Nolan eagerly what they said. The drops stood on poor Nolan's white forehead, as he hushed the men down, and said:—

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[21] By the Treaty of Ghent, 1814, Great Britain and the United States agreed to abolish the slave traffic. In 1820 slave-trade was made piracy punishable by death. Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe were all from Virginia. The "Middle Passage" was that part of the Atlantic between the west African coast and the West Indies, traversed by a slave being brought from Africa to America.

[22] Beled el Jerid, "country of dates," a region in the northern Sahara. Hale probably implies that its language is Parisian in comparison to the Zulu dialect; or he may refer in irony to its actual commercial language, which is corrupt French.

[23] Or Krumen, an industrious, never enslaved tribe in Liberia, West Africa.

[24] "The god from out the machine," a phrase taken from the ancient drama, in which, when external divine intervention took place, it was represented by an actor let down upon the stage by machinery.

"He says, 'Not Palmas.' He says, 'Take us home, take us to our own country, take us to our own house, take us to our own pickaninnies and our own women.' He says he has an old father and mother who will die if they do not see him. And this one says he left his people all sick, and paddled down to Fernando to beg the white doctor to come and help them, and that these devils caught him in the bay just in sight of home, and that he has never seen anybody from home since then. And this one says," choked out Nolan, "that he has not heard a word from his home in six months, while he has been locked up in an infernal barracoon."[25]

Vaughan always said he grew gray himself while Nolan struggled through this interpretation. I, who did not understand anything of the passion involved in it, saw that the very elements were melting with fervent heat, and that something was to pay somewhere. Even the negroes themselves stopped howling, as they saw Nolan's agony, and Vaughan's almost equal agony of sympathy. As quick as he could get words, he said:—

"Tell them yes, yes, yes; tell them they shall go to the Mountains of the Moon, if they will. If I sail the schooner through the Great White Desert, they shall go home!"

And after some fashion Nolan said so. And then they all fell to kissing him again, and wanted to rub his nose with theirs.

But he could not stand it long; and getting Vaughan to say he might go back, he beckoned me down into our boat. As we lay back in the stern-sheets and the men gave way, he said to me: "Youngster, let that show you what it is to be without a family, without a home, and without a country. And if you are ever tempted to say a word or to do a thing that shall put a bar between you and your family, your home, and your country, pray God in his mercy to take you that instant home to his own heaven. Stick by your family, boy; forget you have a self, while you do everything for them. Think of your home, boy; write and send, and talk about it. Let it be nearer and nearer to your thought, the farther you have to travel from it; and rush back to it when you are free, as that poor black slave is doing now. And for your country, boy," and the words rattled in his throat, "and for that flag," and he pointed to the ship, "never dream a dream but of serving her as she bids you, though the service carry you through a thousand hells. No matter what happens to you, no matter who flatters you or who abuses you, never look at another flag, never let a night pass but you pray God to bless that flag. Remember, boy, that behind all these men you have to do with, behind officers, and government, and people even, there is the Country Herself, your Country, and that you belong to Her as you belong to your own mother. Stand by Her, boy, as you would stand by your mother, if those devils there had got hold of her today!"

I was frightened to death by his calm, hard passion; but I blundered out that I would, by all that was holy, and that I had never thought of doing anything else. He hardly seemed to hear me; but he did, almost in a whisper, say,—"Oh, if anybody had said so to me when I was of your age!"

I think it was this half-confidence of his, which I never abused, for I never told this story till now, which afterward made us great friends. He was very kind to me. Often he sat up, or even got up, at night, to walk the deck with me, when it was my watch. He explained to me a great deal of my mathematics, and I owe to him my taste for mathematics. He lent me books, and helped me about my reading. He never alluded so directly to his story again; but from one and another officer I have learned, in thirty years, what I am telling. When we parted from him in St. Thomas harbor, at the end of our cruise, I was more sorry than I can tell. I was very glad to meet him again in 1830; and later in life, when I thought I had some influence in Washington, I moved heaven and earth to have him discharged. But it was like getting a ghost out of prison. They pretended there was no such man, and never was such a man. They will say so at the Department now! Perhaps they do not know. It will not be the first thing in the service of which the Department appears to know nothing!

There is a story that Nolan met Burr once on one of our vessels, when a party of Americans came on board in the Mediterranean. But this I believe to be a lie; or rather, it is a myth, *ben trovato*,[26] involving a tremendous blowing-up with which he sunk Burr,—asking him how he liked to be "without a country." But it is clear from Burr's life, that nothing of the sort could have happened; and I mention this only as an illustration of the stories which get a-going where there is the least mystery at bottom.

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[25] slave pen

[26] well invented (For some years Burr was virtually an exile from the United States, was expelled from England, and rebuffed by Napoleon.)

For him, poor fellow, he repented of his folly, and then, like a man, submitted to the fate he had asked for. He never intentionally added to the difficulty or delicacy of the charge of those who had him in hold. Accidents would happen; but they never happened from his fault. Lieutenant Truxton told me that, when Texas was annexed, there was a careful discussion among the officers, whether they should get hold of Nolan's handsome set of maps and cut Texas out of it,—from the map of the world and the map of Mexico. The United States had been cut out when the atlas was bought for him. But it was voted, rightly enough, that to do this would be virtually to reveal to him what had happened, or, as Harry Cole said, to make him think Old Burr had succeeded. So it was from no fault of Nolan's that a great botch happened at my own table, when, for a short time, I was in command of the *George Washington* corvette, on the South American station. We were lying in the La Plata, and some of the officers, who had been on shore and had just joined again, were entertaining us with accounts of their misadventures in riding the half-wild horses of Buenos Ayres. Nolan was at table, and was in an unusually bright and talkative mood. Some story of a tumble reminded him of an adventure of his own when he was catching wild horses in Texas with his brother Stephen, at a time when he must have been quite a boy. He told the story with a good deal of spirit, —so much so, that the silence which often follows a good story hung over the table for an instant, to be broken by Nolan himself. For he asked perfectly unconsciously,—"Pray, what has become of Texas? After the Mexicans got their independence, I thought that province of Texas would come forward very fast. It is really one of the finest regions on earth; it is the Italy of this continent. But I have not seen or heard a word of Texas for near twenty years."

There were two Texan officers at the table. The reason he had never heard of Texas was that Texas and her affairs had been painfully cut out of his newspapers since Austin[27] began his settlements; so that, while he read of Honduras and Tamaulipas,[28] and, till quite lately, of California,—this virgin province, in which his brother had traveled so far, and, I believe, had died, had ceased to be to him. Waters and Williams, the two Texas men, looked grimly at each other and tried not to laugh. Edward Morris had his attention attracted by the third link in the chain of the captain's chandelier. Watrous was seized with a convulsion of sneezing. Nolan himself saw that something was to pay, he did not know what. And I, as master of the feast, had to say,—

"Texas is out of the map, Mr. Nolan. Have you seen Captain Back's curious account of Sir Thomas Roe's Welcome?"[29]

After that cruise I never saw Nolan again. I wrote to him at least twice a year, for in that voyage we became even confidentially intimate; but he never wrote to me. The other men tell me that in those fifteen years he *aged* very fast, as well he might indeed, but that he was still the same gentle, uncomplaining, silent sufferer that he ever was, bearing as best he could his self-appointed punishment,—rather less social, perhaps, with new men whom he did not know, but more anxious, apparently, than ever to serve and befriend and teach the boys, some of whom fairly seemed to worship him. And now it seems the dear old fellow is dead. He has found a home at last, and a country.

Since writing this, and while considering whether or no I would print it, as a warning to the young Nolans and Vallandighams[30] and Tatnalls of today of what it is to throw away a country, I have received from Danforth, who is on board the *Levant*, a letter which gives an account of Nolan's last hours. It removes all my doubts about telling this story.

To understand the first words of the letter, the non-professional reader should remember that after 1817, the position of every officer who had Nolan in charge was one of the greatest delicacy. The government had failed to renew the order of 1807 regarding him. What was a man to do? Should he let him go? What, then, if he were called to account by the Department for violating the order of 1807? Should he keep him? What, then, if Nolan should be liberated some day, and should bring an action for false imprisonment or kidnapping against every man who had had him in charge? I urged and pressed this upon Southard,[8] and I have reason to think that other officers did the same thing. But the Secretary always said, as they often do at Washington, that there were no special orders to give, and that we must act on our own judgment. That means, "if you succeed, you will be sustained; if you fail, you will be disavowed." Well, as Danforth says, all that is over now, though I do not know but I expose myself to a criminal prosecution on the evidence of the very revelation I am making.

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[27] Stephen Fuller Austin in 1821 first led a colony of settlers from the United States into Texas, thus carrying out the purpose of his father, Moses Austin.

[28] A Mexican state that borders on Texas.

[29] Captain Back was a famous English Arctic explorer of Hale's time. Sir Thomas Roe was a traveler and English diplomat of the seventeenth century. He was a patron of an exploring expedition under Captain Luke Fox, who in 1631 named an island north of Hudson's Bay "Sir Thomas Roe's Welcome Island." The name is now confined to the straits surrounding the island.

[30] Clement Vallandigham, leader of the "Copperheads," i. e., northerners who were believed to sympathize unduly with the South in the Civil War, was once arrested by the Federal troops and banished to the Confederate lines. Commodore Josiah Tattnall, a gallant naval officer, resigned from the Federal navy to join the Confederate navy. It must be remembered that Hale was writing in war times and was strongly partisan.

Here is the letter:—

Levant, 2° 2′ S. @ 131° W.

"DEAR FRED:—I try to find heart and life to tell you that it is all over with dear old Nolan. I have been with him on this voyage more than I ever was, and I can understand wholly now the way in which you used to speak of the dear old fellow. I could see that he was not strong, but I had no idea the end was so near. The doctor has been watching him very carefully, and yesterday morning came to me and told me that Nolan was not so well, and had not left his state-room,—a thing I never remember before. He had let the doctor come and see him as he lay there,—the first time the doctor had been in the state-room,—and he said he should like to see me. Oh, dear! do you remember the mysteries we boys used to invent about his room in the old *Intrepid* days? Well, I went in, and there, to be sure, the poor fellow lay in his berth, smiling pleasantly as he gave me his hand, but looking very frail. I could not help a glance round, which showed me what a little shrine he had made of the box he was lying in. The stars and stripes were triced up above and around a picture of Washington, and he had painted a majestic eagle, with lightnings blazing from his beak and his foot just clasping the whole globe, which his wings overshadowed. The dear old boy saw my glance, and said, with a sad smile, 'Here, you see, I have a country!' And then he pointed to the foot of his bed, where I had not seen before a great map of the United States, as he had drawn it from memory, and which he had there to look upon as he lay. Quaint, queer old names were on it, in large letters: 'Indiana Territory,' 'Mississippi Territory,' and 'Louisiana Territory,' as I suppose our fathers learned such things: but the old fellow had patched in Texas, too; he had carried his western boundary all the way to the Pacific, but on that shore he had defined nothing.

"'O Danforth,' he said, 'I know I am dying. I cannot get home. Surely you will tell me something now?—Stop! stop. Do not speak till I say what I am sure you know, that there is not in this ship, that there is not in America,—God bless her!—a more loyal man than I. There cannot be a man who loves the old flag as I do, or prays for it as I do, or hopes for it as I do. There are thirty-four stars in it now, Danforth. I thank God for that, though I do not know what their names are. There has never been one taken away: I thank God for that. I know by that that there has never been any successful Burr. O Danforth, Danforth,' he sighed out, 'how like a wretched night's dream a boy's idea of personal fame or of separate sovereignty seems, when one looks back on it after such a life as mine! But tell me,—tell me something,—tell me everything, Danforth, before I die!'

"Ingham, I swear to you that I felt like a monster that I had not told him everything before. Danger or no danger, delicacy or no delicacy, who was I, that I should have been acting the tyrant all this time over this dear, sainted old man, who had years ago expiated, in his whole manhood's life, the madness of a boy's treason? 'Mr. Nolan,' said I, 'I will tell you everything you ask about. Only, where shall I begin?'

"Oh, the blessed smile that crept over his white face! and he pressed my hand and said, 'God bless you! Tell me their names,' he said, and he pointed to the stars on the flag. 'The last I know is Ohio. My father lived in Kentucky. But I have guessed Michigan and Indiana and Mississippi,—that was where Fort Adams is,—they make twenty. But where are your other fourteen? You have not cut up any of the old ones, I hope?'

"Well, that was not a bad text, and I told him the names in as good order as I could, and he bade me take down his beautiful map and draw them in as I best could with my pencil. He was wild with delight about Texas, told me how his brother died there; he had marked a gold cross where he supposed his brother's grave was; and he had guessed at Texas. Then he was delighted as he saw California and Oregon;—that, he said, he had suspected partly, because he had never been permitted to land on that shore, though the ships were there so much. 'And the men,' said he, laughing, 'brought off a good deal besides furs.' Then he went back—heavens, how far!—to ask about the *Chesapeake*,[31] and what was done to Barron for surrendering her to the *Leopard*, and whether Burr ever tried again,— and he ground his teeth with the only passion he showed. But in a moment that was over, and he said, 'God forgive me, for I am sure I forgive him.' Then he asked about the old war,— told me the true story of his serving the gun the day we took the *Java*,—asked about dear old David Porter, as he called him. Then he settled down more quietly, and very happily, to hear me tell in an hour the history of fifty years.

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[31] In 1807 the American frigate *Chesapeake*, commanded by James Barron, was pursued by the English frigate *Leopard*, whose commander demanded the delivery of four men, three of whom were native Americans. Barron refused and the *Leopard* opened fire. The

"How I wished it had been somebody who knew something! But I did as well as I could. I told him of the English war. I told him about Fulton and the steamboat beginning. I told him about old Scott, and Jackson; told him all I could think about the Mississippi, and New Orleans, and Texas, and his own old Kentucky. And do you think, he asked me who was in command of the "Legion of the West." I told him it was a very gallant officer named Grant, and that, by our last news, he was about to establish his headquarters at Vicksburg. Then, 'Where was Vicksburg?' I worked that out on the map; it was about a hundred miles, more or less, above his old Fort Adams; and I thought Fort Adams must be a ruin now. 'It must be at old Vick's plantation,' said he: 'well, that is a change!'

"I tell you, Ingham, it was a hard thing to condense the history of half a century into that talk with a sick man. And I do not now know what I told him,— of emigration, and the means of it,— of steamboats, and railroads, and telegraphs,— of inventions, and books, and literature,— of the colleges, and West Point, and the Naval School,— but with the queerest interruptions that ever you heard. You see it was Robinson Crusoe asking all the accumulated questions of fifty-six years!

"I remember he asked, all of a sudden, who was President now; and when I told him, he asked if Old Abe was General Benjamin Lincoln's[32] son. He said he met old General Lincoln, when he was quite a boy himself, at some Indian treaty. I said no, that Old Abe was a Kentuckian like himself, but I could not tell him of what family; he had worked up from the ranks. 'Good for him!' cried Nolan; 'I am glad of that. As I have brooded and wondered, I have thought our danger was in keeping up those regular successions in the first families.' Then I got talking about my visit to Washington. I told him about meeting the Oregon Congressman, Harding; I told him about the Smithsonian, and the Exploring Expedition[33]; I told him about the Capitol, and the statues for the pediment, and Crawford's Liberty,[34] and Greenough's Washington: Ingham, I told him everything I could think of that would show the grandeur of his country and its prosperity; but I could not make up my mouth to tell him a word about this infernal rebellion!

"And he drank it in and enjoyed it as I cannot tell you. He grew more and more silent, yet I never thought he was tired or faint. I gave him a glass of water, but he just wet his lips, and told me not to go away. Then he asked me to bring the Presbyterian 'Book of Public Prayer' which lay there, and said, with a smile, that it would open at the right place,—and so it did. There was his double red mark down the page; and I knelt down and read, and he repeated with me, 'For ourselves and our country, O gracious God, we thank Thee, that, notwithstanding our manifold transgressions of Thy holy laws, Thou hast continued to us Thy marvelous kindness,'—and so to the end of that thanksgiving. Then he turned to the end of the same book, and I read the words more familiar to me: 'Most heartily we beseech Thee with Thy favor to behold and bless Thy servant, the President of the United States, and all others in authority,'—and the rest of the Episcopal collect. 'Danforth,' said he, 'I have repeated those prayers night and morning, it is now fifty-five years.' And then he said he would go to sleep. He bent me down over him and kissed me; and he said, 'Look in my Bible, Danforth, when I am gone.' And I went away.

"But I had no thought it was the end. I thought he was tired and would sleep. I knew he was happy, and I wanted him to be alone.

"But in an hour, when the doctor went in gently, he found Nolan had breathed his life away with a smile. He had something pressed close to his lips. It was his father's badge of the Order of Cincinnati.[35]

"We looked in his Bible, and there was a slip of paper at the place where he had marked the text:—

"'They desire a country, even a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city.'

"On this slip of paper he had written:

"'Bury me in the sea; it has been my

Chesapeake was unprepared, and after three of her men had been killed and sixteen wounded she was boarded from the *Leopard* and the four men were seized. One was hanged, one died in prison, and two were not returned for five years. The incident aroused strong feeling. Barron does not seem to have been to blame.

[32] A Revolutionary general, secretary of war 1781-84.

[33] John C. Frémont in 1842 explored parts of the Rocky Mountains, and in 1843-44 and 1845 the Pacific slope; in 1853 he completed his exploration of a route to California.

[34] Thomas Crawford, 1814-1857, an American sculptor, designed the Statue of Liberty surmounting the Capitol at Washington, and the bronze doors depicting the life of Washington. The statue of Washington near the Capitol is by another American sculptor, Horatio Greenough, 1805-1852.

[35] An association of the regular officers of the American Army of the Revolution. Washington was its first president.

home, and I love it. But will not some one set up a stone for my memory at Fort Adams or at Orleans, that my disgrace may not be more than I ought to bear? Say on it:—

'In Memory of

'PHILIP NOLAN,

'Lieutenant in the Army of the United States.

'He loved his country as no other man has
loved her; but no man deserved less at
her hands.'

1865

WALT WHITMAN

Born, Westhills, Long Island, 1819, died, Camden, New Jersey, 1892. Whitman's ancestry was partly Dutch, partly English Quaker; his father was a farmer-carpenter and building contractor. Whitman received some education in the public schools of Brooklyn and New York, learned the trades of carpentry and typesetting, but though at times he followed these, his life was more or less wandering and experimental. *Leaves of Grass* appeared in 1855, but attracted little favorable attention except from Emerson. In 1862 Whitman became a nurse in the hospital and field service of the Union Army and remained there until the close of the war, when he was made a clerk in the Treasury department, where he worked until he suffered a stroke of paralysis in 1873. Aside from *Leaves of Grass,* which appeared in eleven editions during his life, his chief works are *Drum Taps,* 1865; *Specimen Days and Collect,* prose, 1882; *Good-bye, My Fancy,* 1891.

From *LEAVES OF GRASS*

CROSSING BROOKLYN FERRY

1

Flood-tide below me! I see you face to face!
Clouds of the west—sun there half an hour high—I see you also face to face.

Crowds of men and women attired in the usual costumes, how curious you are to me!
On the ferry-boats the hundreds and hundreds that cross, returning home, are more curious to me than you suppose,
And you that shall cross from shore to shore years hence are more to me, and more in my meditations, than you might suppose.

2

The impalpable sustenance of me from all things at all hours of the day,
The simple, compact, well-join'd scheme, myself disintegrated, every one disintegrated yet part of the scheme,
The similitudes of the past and those of the future,
The glories strung like beads on my smallest sights and hearings, on the walk in the street and the passage over the river,
The current rushing so swiftly and swimming with me far away,
The others that are to follow me, the ties between me and them,
The certainty of others, the life, love, sight, hearing of others.

Others will enter the gates of the ferry and cross from shore to shore,
Others will watch the run of the flood-tide,
Others will see the shipping of Manhattan north and west, and the heights of Brooklyn to the south and east,
Others will see the islands large and small;
Fifty years hence, others will see them as they cross, the sun half an hour high,
A hundred years hence, or ever so many hundred years hence, others will see them,
Will enjoy the sunset, the pouring-in of the flood-tide, the falling-back to the sea of the ebb-tide.

3

It avails not, time nor place—distance avails not,
I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or ever so many generations hence,
Just as you feel when you look on the river and sky, so I felt,
Just as any of you is one of a living crowd, I was one of a crowd,
Just as you are refresh'd by the gladness of the river and the bright flow, I was refresh'd,
Just as you stand and lean on the rail, yet hurry with the swift current, I stood yet was hurried,
Just as you look on the numberless masts of ships and the thick-stemm'd pipes of steamboats, I look'd.

I too many and many a time cross'd the river of old,
Watched the Twelfth-month[1] sea-gulls, saw them high in the air floating with motionless wings, oscillating their bodies,
Saw how the glistening yellow lit up parts of their bodies and left the rest in strong shadow,
Saw the slow-wheeling circles and the gradual edging toward the south,
Saw the reflection of the summer sky in the water,
Had my eyes dazzled by the shimmering track of beams,
Look'd at the fine centrifugal spokes of light round the shape of my head in the sunlit water,
Look'd on the haze on the hills southward and south-westward,
Look'd on the vapor as it flew in fleeces tinged with violet,
Look'd toward the lower bay to notice the vessels arriving,
Saw their approach, saw aboard those that were near me,
Saw the white sails of schooners and sloops, saw the ships at anchor,
The sailors at work in the rigging or out astride the spars,
The round masts, the swinging motion of the hulls, the slender serpentine pennants,
The large and small steamers in motion, the pilots in their pilot-houses,
The white wake left by the passage, the quick tremulous whirl of the wheels,
The flags of all nations, the falling of them at sunset,
The scallop-edged waves in the twilight, the ladled cups, the frolicsome crests and glistening,
The stretch afar growing dimmer and dimmer, the gray walls of the granite storehouses by the docks,
On the river the shadowy group, the big steam-tug closely flank'd on each side by the barges, the hay-boat, the belated lighter,
On the neighboring shore the fires from the foundry chimneys burning high and glaringly into the night,
Casting their flicker of black contrasted with wild red and yellow light over the tops of houses, and down into the clefts of streets.

4

These and all else were to me the same as they are to you,
I loved well those cities, loved well the stately and rapid river,
The men and women I saw were all near to me,
Others the same—others who look back on me because I look'd forward to them,
(The time will come, though I stop here today and tonight.)

5

What is it then between us?
What is the count of the scores or hundreds of years between us?

Whatever it is, it avails not—distance avails not, and place avails not,
I too lived, Brooklyn of ample hills was mine,
I too walk'd the streets of Manhattan island, and bathed in the waters around it,
I too felt the curious abrupt questionings stir within me,
In the day among crowds of people sometimes they came upon me,
In my walks home late at night or as I lay in my bed they came upon me,
I too had been struck from the float forever held in solution,
I too had receiv'd identity by my body,
That I was I knew was of my body, and what I should be I knew I should be of my body.

6

It is not upon you alone the dark patches fall,
The dark threw its patches down upon me also,
The best I had done seem'd to me blank and suspicious,
My great thoughts as I supposed them, were they not in reality meager?
Nor is it you alone who know what it is to be evil,
I am he who knew what it was to be evil,
I too knitted the old knot of contrariety,
Blabb'd, blush'd, resented, lied, stole, grudg'd,
Had guile, anger, lust, hot wishes I dared not speak,
Was wayward, vain, greedy, shallow, sly, cowardly, malignant,

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[1] December in Quaker terminology. Cf. "Fifth Month grass" in *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking*, p. 751, l. 3.

The wolf, the snake, the hog, not wanting in me,
The cheating look, the frivolous word, the adulterous wish, not wanting,
Refusals, hates, postponements, meanness, laziness, none of these wanting,
Was one with the rest, the days and haps of the rest,
Was call’d by my nighest name by clear loud voices of young men as they saw me approaching or passing,
Felt their arms on my neck as I stood, or the negligent leaning of their flesh against me as I sat,
Saw many I loved in the street or ferry-boat or public assembly, yet never told them a word,
Lived the same life with the rest, the same old laughing, gnawing, sleeping,
Play’d the part that still looks back on the actor or actress,
The same old role, the role that is what we make it, as great as we like,
Or as small as we like, or both great and small.

7

Closer yet I approach you,
What thought you have of me now, I had as much of you—I laid in my stores in advance,
I consider’d long and seriously of you before you were born.

Who was to know what should come home to me?
Who knows but I am enjoying this?
Who knows, for all the distance, but I am as good as looking at you now, for all you cannot see me?

8

Ah, what can ever be more stately and admirable to me than mast-hemm’d Manhattan?
River and sunset and scallop-edg’d waves of flood-tide?
The sea-gulls oscillating their bodies, the hay-boat in the twilight, and the belated lighter?

What gods can exceed these that clasp me by the hand, and with voices I love call me promptly and loudly by my nighest name as I approach?
What is more subtle than this which ties me to the woman or man that looks in my face?
Which fuses me into you now, and pours my meaning into you?

We understand then do we not?
What I promis’d without mentioning it, have you not accepted?
What the study could not teach—what the preaching could not accomplish is accomplish’d, is it not?

9

Flow on, river! flow with the flood-tide, and ebb with the ebb-tide!
Frolic on, crested and scallop-edg’d waves!
Gorgeous clouds of the sunset! drench with your splendor me, or the men and women generations after me!
Cross from shore to shore, countless crowds of passengers!
Stand up, tall masts of Mannahatta! stand up, beautiful hills of Brooklyn!
Throb, baffled and curious brain! throw out questions and answers!
Suspend here and everywhere, eternal float of solution!
Gaze, loving and thirsting eyes, in the house or street or public assembly!
Sound out, voices of young men! loudly and musically call me by my nighest name!
Live, old life! play the part that looks back on the actor or actress!
Play the old role, the role that is great or small according as one makes it!
Consider, you who peruse me, whether I may not in unknown ways be looking upon you;
Be firm, rail over the river, to support those who lean idly, yet haste with the hasting current;
Fly on, sea-birds! fly sideways, or wheel in large circles high in the air;
Receive the summer sky, you water, and faithfully hold it till all downcast eyes have time to take it from you!
Diverge, fine spokes of light, from the shape of my head, or any one’s head, in the sunlit water!
Come on, ships from the lower bay! pass up or down, white-sail’d schooners, sloops, lighters!
Flaunt away, flags of all nations! be duly lower’d at sunset!
Burn high your fires, foundry chimneys! cast black shadows at nightfall! cast red and yellow light over the tops of the houses!

Appearances, now or henceforth, indicate what you are,
You necessary film, continue to envelop the soul,
About my body for me, and your body for you, be hung our divinest aromas,
Thrive, cities—bring your freight, bring your shows, ample and sufficient rivers,
Expand, being than which none else is perhaps more spiritual,
Keep your places, objects than which none else is more lasting.

You have waited, you always wait, you dumb, beautiful ministers,
We receive you with free sense at last, and are insatiate henceforward,
Not you any more shall be able to foil us, or withhold yourselves from us,
We use you, and do not cast you aside—we plant you permanently within us,
We fathom you not—we love you—there is perfection in you also,
You furnish your parts toward eternity,
Great or small, you furnish your parts toward the soul.

1856

OUT OF THE CRADLE ENDLESSLY ROCKING

Out of the cradle endlessly rocking,
Out of the mocking-bird's throat, the musical shuttle,
Out of the Ninth-month midnight,
Over the sterile sands and the fields beyond, where the child leaving his bed wander'd alone, bareheaded, barefoot,
Down from the shower'd halo,
Up from the mystic play of shadows twining and twisting as if they were alive,
Out from the patches of briers and blackberries,
From the memories of the bird that chanted to me,
From your memories sad brother, from the fitful risings and fallings I heard,
From under that yellow half-moon late-risen and swollen as if with tears,
From those beginning notes of yearning and love there in the mist,
From the thousand responses of my heart never to cease,
From the myriad thence-arous'd words,
From the word stronger and more delicious than any,
From such as now they start the scene revisiting,
As a flock, twittering, rising, or overhead passing,
Borne hither, ere all eludes me, hurriedly,
A man, yet by these tears a little boy again,
Throwing myself on the sand, confronting the waves,
I, chanter of pains and joys, uniter of here and hereafter,
Taking all hints to use them, but swiftly leaping beyond them,
A reminiscence sing.

Once Paumanok,[1]
When the lilac-scent was in the air and Fifth-month grass was growing,
Up this seashore in some briers,
Two feather'd guests from Alabama, two together,
And their nest, and four light-green eggs spotted with brown,
And every day the he-bird to and fro near at hand,
And every day the she-bird crouch'd on her nest, silent, with bright eyes,
And every day I, a curious boy, never too close, never disturbing them,
Cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.

Shine! shine! shine!
Pour down your warmth, great sun!
While we bask, we two together.

Two together!
Winds blow south, or winds blow north,
Day come white, or night come black,
Home, or rivers and mountains from home,
Singing all time, minding no time,
While we two keep together.

Till of a sudden,
May-be kill'd, unknown to her mate,
One forenoon the she-bird crouch'd not on the nest,
Nor return'd that afternoon, nor the next,
Nor ever appear'd again.

And thenceforward all summer in the sound of the sea,
And at night under the full of the moon in calmer weather,
Over the hoarse surging of the sea,
Or flitting from brier to brier by day,
I saw, I heard at intervals the remaining one, the he-bird,
The solitary guest from Alabama.

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[1] The Indian name for Long Island. Whitman used it at first as a pseudonym.

Blow! blow! blow!
Blow up sea-winds along Paumanok's shore;
I wait and I wait till you blow my mate to me.

Yes, when the stars glisten'd,
All night long on the prong of a moss-scallop'd stake,
Down almost amid the slapping waves,
Sat the lone singer wonderful causing tears.

He call'd on his mate,
He pour'd forth the meanings which I of all men know.

Yes my brother I know,
The rest might not, but I have treasur'd every note,
For more than once dimly down to the beach gliding,
Silent, avoiding the moonbeams, blending myself with the shadows,
Recalling now the obscure shapes, the echoes, the sounds and sights after their sorts,
The white arms out in the breakers tirelessly tossing,
I, with bare feet, a child, the wind wafting my hair,
Listen'd long and long.

Listen'd to keep, to sing, now translating the notes,
Following you my brother.

Soothe! soothe! soothe!
Close on its wave soothes the wave behind,
And again another behind embracing and lapping, every one close,
But my love soothes not me, not me.

Low hangs the moon, it rose late,
It is lagging—O I think it is heavy with love, with love.

O madly the sea pushes upon the land,
With love, with love.

O night! do I not see my love fluttering out among the breakers?
What is that little black thing I see there in the white?

Loud! loud! loud!
Loud I call to you, my love!

High and clear I shoot my voice over the waves,
Surely you must know who is here, is here,
You must know who I am, my love.

Low-hanging moon!
What is that dusky spot in your brown yellow?
O it is the shape, the shape of my mate!
O moon do not keep her from me any longer.

Land! land! O land!
Whichever way I turn, O I think you could give me my mate back again if you only would,
For I am almost sure I see her dimly whichever way I look.

O rising stars!
Perhaps the one I want so much will rise, will rise with some of you.

O throat! O trembling throat!
Sound clearer through the atmosphere!
Pierce the woods, the earth,
Somewhere listening to catch you must be the one I want.

Shake out carols!
Solitary here, the night's carols!
Carols of lonesome love! death's carols!
Carols under that lagging, yellow, waning moon!
O under that moon where she droops almost down into the sea!
O reckless despairing carols.

But soft! sink low!
Soft! let me just murmur,
And do you wait a moment you husky-nois'd sea,
For somewhere I believe I heard my mate responding to me,
So faint, I must be still, be still to listen,
But not altogether still, for then she might not come immediately to me.

Hither my love!
Here I am! here!
With this just-sustain'd note I announce myself to you,
This gentle call is for you my love, for you.

Do not be decoy'd elsewhere,
That is the whistle of the wind, it is not my voice,

That is the fluttering, the fluttering of the spray,
Those are the shadows of leaves.

O darkness! O in vain!
O I am very sick and sorrowful.

O brown halo in the sky near the moon, drooping upon the sea!
O troubled reflection in the sea!
O throat! O throbbing heart!
And I singing uselessly, uselessly all the night.

O past! O happy life! O songs of joy!
In the air, in the woods, over fields,
Loved! loved! loved! loved! loved!
But my mate no more, no more with me!
We two together no more.

The aria sinking,
All else continuing, the stars shining,
The winds blowing, the notes of the bird continuous echoing,
With angry moans the fierce old mother incessantly moaning,
On the sands of Paumanok's shore gray and rustling,
The yellow half-moon enlarged, sagging down, drooping, the face of the sea almost touching,
The boy ecstatic, with his bare feet the waves, with his hair the atmosphere dallying,
The love in the heart long pent, now loose, now at last tumultuously bursting,
The aria's meaning, the ears, the soul, swiftly depositing,
The strange tears down the cheeks coursing,
The colloquy there, the trio, each uttering,
The undertone, the savage old mother incessantly crying,
To the boy's soul's questions sullenly timing, some drown'd secret hissing,
To the outsetting bard.

Demon or bird! (said the boy's soul,)
Is it indeed toward your mate you sing? or is it really to me?
For I, that was a child, my tongue's use sleeping, now I have heard you,
Now in a moment I know what I am for, I awake,
And already a thousand singers, a thousand songs, clearer, louder and more sorrowful than yours,
A thousand warbling echoes have started to life within me, never to die.

O you singer solitary, singing by yourself, projecting me,
O solitary me listening, never more shall I cease perpetuating you,
Never more shall I escape, never more the reverberations,
Never more the cries of unsatisfied love be absent from me,
Never again leave me to be the peaceful child I was before what there in the night,
By the sea under the yellow and sagging moon,
The messenger there arous'd, the fire, the sweet hell within,
The unknown want, the destiny of me.

O give me the clew! (it lurks in the night here somewhere,)
O if I am to have so much, let me have more!

A word then, (for I will conquer it,)
The word final, superior to all,
Subtle, sent up—what is it?—I listen;
Are you whispering it, and have been all the time, you sea-waves?
Is that it from your liquid rims and wet sands?

Whereto answering, the sea,
Delaying not, hurrying not,
Whisper'd me through the night, and very plainly before daybreak,
Lisp'd to me the low and delicious word death,
And again death, death, death, death,
Hissing melodious, neither like the bird nor like my arous'd child's heart,
But edging near as privately for me rustling at my feet,
Creeping thence steadily up to my ears and laving me softly all over,
Death, death, death, death, death.

Which I do not forget,
But fuse the song of my dusky demon and brother,
That he sang to me in the moonlight on Paumanok's gray beach,
With the thousand responsive songs at random,
My own songs awaked from that hour,
And with them the key, the word up from the waves,
The word of the sweetest song and all songs,
That strong and delicious word which, creeping to my feet,

(Or like some old crone rocking the cradle, swathed in sweet garments, bending aside,)
The sea whisper'd me.

1859

ME IMPERTURBE[1]

Me imperturbe, standing at ease in Nature,
Master of all or mistress of all, aplomb in the midst of irrational things,
Imbued as they, passive, receptive, silent as they,
Finding my occupation, poverty, notoriety, foibles, crimes, less important than I thought,
Me toward the Mexican sea, or in the Mannahatta or the Tennessee, or far north or inland,
A river man, or a man of the woods or of any farm-life of these States or of the coast, or the lakes or Canada,
Me wherever my life is lived, O to be self-balanced for contingencies,
To confront night, storms, hunger, ridicule, accidents, rebuffs, as the trees and animals do.

1860

POETS TO COME

Poets to come! orators, singers, musicians to come!
Not today is to justify me and answer what I am for,
But you, a new brood, native, athletic, continental, greater than before known,
Arouse! for you must justify me.

I myself but write one or two indicative words for the future,
I but advance a moment only to wheel and hurry back in the darkness.

I am a man who, sauntering along without fully stopping, turns a casual look upon you and then averts his face,
Leaving it to you to prove and define it,
Expecting the main things from you.

1860

I HEAR AMERICA SINGING

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deck-hand singing on the steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,
The wood-cutter's song, the plowboy's on his way in the morning, or at noon intermission or at sundown,
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of the girl sewing or washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,
The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

1860

I SAW IN LOUISIANA A LIVE-OAK GROWING

I saw in Louisiana a live-oak growing,
All alone stood it and the moss hung down from the branches,
Without any companion it grew there uttering joyous leaves of dark green,
And its look, rude, unbending, lusty, made me think of myself,
But I wonder'd how it could utter joyous leaves standing alone there without its friend near, for I knew I could not,
And I broke off a twig with a certain number of leaves upon it, and twined around it a little moss,
And brought it away, and I have placed it in sight in my room,
It is not needed to remind me as of my own dear friends,
(For I believe lately I think of little else than of them,)
Yet it remains to me a curious token, it makes me think of manly love;
For all that, and though the live-oak glistens there in Louisiana solitary in a wide flat space,

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[1] As here, Whitman often coins words to fit his purpose, the correct Latin form being *me imperturbato*, "I undisturbed." It is interesting to note the extreme range of Whitman's vocabulary, which includes such quasi-learned words as "fetor," "libertad," the "parturient earth," and such phrases as "so long." Thus while he uses the customary poetic and the learned vocabulary of his time, he stretches the confines of poetic diction to include coinages and vulgar dialect.

Uttering joyous leaves all its life without a friend, a lover near,
I know very well I could not.

1860

AS AT THY PORTALS ALSO DEATH

As at thy portals also death,
Entering thy sovereign, dim, illimitable grounds,
To memories of my mother, to the divine blending, maternity,
To her, buried and gone, yet buried not, gone not from me,
(I see again the calm benignant face fresh and beautiful still,
I sit by the form in the coffin,
I kiss and kiss convulsively again the sweet old lips, the cheeks, the closed eyes in the coffin;)
To her, the ideal woman, practical, spiritual, of all of earth, life, love, to me the best,
I grave a monumental line, before I go, amid these songs,
And set a tombstone here.

FOR YOU O DEMOCRACY

Come, I will make the continent indissoluble,
I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon,
I will make divine magnetic lands,
  With the love of comrades,
    With the life-long love of comrades.

I will plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of America, and along the shores of the great lakes, and all over the prairies,
I will make inseparable cities with their arms about each other's necks,
  By the love of comrades,
    By the manly love of comrades.

For you these from me, O Democracy, to serve you *ma femme!*[1]
For you, for you I am trilling these songs.

1860

SO LONG!

To conclude, I announce what comes after me.

I remember I said before my leaves sprang at all,
I would raise my voice jocund and strong with reference to consummations.

When America does what was promis'd,
When through these States walk a hundred millions of superb persons,
When the rest part away for superb persons and contribute to them,
When breeds of the most perfect mothers denote America,
Then to me and mine our due fruition.

I have press'd through in my own right,
I have sung the body and the soul, war and peace have I sung, and the songs of life and death,
And the songs of birth, and shown that there are many births.

I have offer'd my style to every one, I have journey'd with confident step;
While my pleasure is yet at the full I whisper *So long!*
And take the young woman's hand and the young man's hand for the last time.

I announce natural persons to arise,
I announce justice triumphant,
I announce uncompromising liberty and equality,
I announce the justification of candor and the justification of pride.

I announce that the identity of these States is a single identity only,
I announce the Union more and more compact, indissoluble,
I announce splendors and majesties to make all the previous politics of the earth insignificant.

I announce adhesiveness, I say it shall be limitless, unloosen'd,
I say you shall yet find the friend you were looking for.

I announce a man or woman coming, perhaps you are the one, (*So long!*)
I announce the great individual, fluid as Nature, chaste, affectionate, compassionate, fully arm'd.

I announce a life that shall be copious, vehement, spiritual, bold,
I announce an end that shall lightly and joyfully meet its translation.

I announce myriads of youths, beautiful, gigantic, sweet-blooded,
I announce a race of splendid and savage old men.

---

[1] my wife

O thicker and faster—(*So long!*)
O crowding too close upon me,
I foresee too much, it means more than I thought,
It appears to me I am dying.

Hasten throat and sound your last,
Salute me—salute the days once more. Peal the old cry once more.

Screaming electric, the atmosphere using,
At random glancing, each as I notice absorbing,
Swiftly on, but a little while alighting,
Curious envelop'd messages delivering,
Sparkles hot, seed ethereal down in the dirt dropping,
Myself unknowing, my commission obeying, to question it never daring,
To ages and ages yet the growth of the seed leaving,
To troops out of the war arising, they the tasks I have set promulging,
To women certain whispers of myself bequeathing, their affection me more clearly explaining,
To young men my problems offering—no dallier I—I the muscle of their brains trying,
So I pass, a little time vocal, visible, contrary,
Afterward a melodious echo, passionately bent for, (death making me really undying)
The best of me then when no longer visible, for toward that I have been incessantly preparing.

What is there more, that I lag and pause and crouch extended with unshut mouth?
Is there a single final farewell?

My songs cease, I abandon them,
From behind the screen where I hid I advance personally solely to you.

Camerado, this is no book,
Who touches this touches a man,
(Is it night? are we here together alone?)
It is I you hold and who holds you,
I spring from the pages into your arms—decease calls me forth.

O how your fingers drowse me,
Your breath falls around me like dew, your pulse lulls the tympans of my ears,
I feel immerged from head to foot,
Delicious, enough.

Enough O deed impromptu and secret,
Enough O gliding present—enough O summ'd-up past.

Dear friend whoever you are take this kiss,
I give it especially to you, do not forget me,
I feel like one who has done work for the day to retire awhile,
I receive now again of my many translations, from my avataras[1] ascending, while others doubtless await me,
An unknown sphere more real than I dream'd, more direct, darts awakening rays about me, *So long!*
Remember my words, I may again return,
I love you, I depart from materials,
I am as one disembodied, triumphant, dead.

1860

PIONEERS! O PIONEERS!

Come my tan-faced children,
Follow well in order, get your weapons ready,
Have you your pistols? have you your sharp-edged axes?
Pioneers! O pioneers!

For we cannot tarry here,
We must march my darlings, we must bear the brunt of danger,
We the youthful sinewy races, all the rest on us depend,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O you youths, Western youths,
So impatient, full of action, full of manly pride and friendship,
Plain I see you Western youths, see you tramping with the foremost,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Have the elder races halted?
Do they droop and end their lesson, wearied over there beyond the seas?
We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the lesson,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

All the past we leave behind,
We debouch upon a newer mightier world, varied world,
Fresh and strong the world we seize, world of labor and the march,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

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[1] previous incarnations

We detachments steady throwing,
Down the edges, through the passes, up the mountains steep,
Conquering, holding, daring, venturing as we go the unknown ways,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

We primeval forests felling,
We the rivers stemming, vexing we and piercing deep the mines within,
We the surface broad surveying, we the virgin soil upheaving,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Colorado men are we,
From the peaks gigantic, from the great sierras and the high plateaus,
From the mine and from the gully, from the hunting trail we come,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

From Nebraska, from Arkansas,
Central inland race are we, from Missouri, with the continental blood intervein'd,
All the hands of comrades clasping, all the Southern, all the Northern,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O resistless restless race!
O beloved race in all! O my breast aches with tender love for all!
O I mourn and yet exult, I am rapt with love for all,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Raise the mighty mother mistress,
Waving high the delicate mistress, over all the starry mistress, (bend your heads all,)
Raise the fang'd and warlike mistress, stern, impassive, weapon'd mistress,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

See my children, resolute children,
By those swarms upon our rear we must never yield or falter,
Ages back in ghostly millions frowning there behind us urging,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

On and on the compact ranks,
With accessions ever waiting, with the places of the dead quickly fill'd,
Through the battle, through defeat, moving yet and never stopping,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O to die advancing on!
Are there some of us to droop and die? has the hour come?
Then upon the march we fittest die, soon and sure the gap is fill'd,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

All the pulses of the world,
Falling in they beat for us, with the Western movement beat,
Holding single or together, steady moving to the front, all for us,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Life's involv'd and varied pageants,
All the forms and shows, all the workmen at their work,
All the seamen and the landsmen, all the masters with their slaves,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

All the hapless silent lovers,
All the prisoners in the prisons, all the righteous and the wicked,
All the joyous, all the sorrowing, all the living, all the dying,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

I too with my soul and body,
We, a curious trio, picking, wandering on our way,
Through these shores amid the shadows, with the apparitions pressing,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Lo, the darting bowling orb!
Lo, the brother orbs around, all the clustering suns and planets,
All the dazzling days, all the mystic nights with dreams,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

These are of us, they are with us,
All for primal needed work, while the followers there in embryo wait behind,
We today's procession heading, we the route for travel clearing,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

O you daughters of the West!
O you young and elder daughters! O you mothers and you wives!
Never must you be divided, in our ranks you move united,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Minstrels latent on the prairies!
(Shrouded bards of other lands, you may rest, you have done your work,)

Soon I hear you coming warbling, soon you rise and tramp amid us,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Not for delectations sweet,
Not the cushion and the slipper, not the peaceful and the studious,
Not the riches safe and palling, not for us the tame enjoyment,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Do the feasters gluttonous feast?
Do the corpulent sleepers sleep? have they lock'd and bolted doors?
Still be ours the diet hard, and the blanket on the ground,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Has the night descended?
Was the road of late so toilsome? did we stop discouraged nodding on our way?
Yet a passing hour I yield you in your tracks to pause oblivious,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

Till with sound of trumpet,
Far, far off the daybreak call—hark! how loud and clear I hear it wind,
Swift! to the head of the army!—swift! spring to your places,
Pioneers! O pioneers!

1865

EIGHTEEN SIXTY-ONE[1]

Arm'd year—year of the struggle,
No dainty rimes or sentimental love verses for you terrible year,
Not you as some pale poetling seated at a desk lisping cadenzas piano,
But as a strong man erect, clothed in blue clothes, advancing, carrying a rifle on your shoulder,
With well-gristled body and sunburnt face and hands, with a knife in the belt at your side,
As I heard you shouting loud, your sonorous voice ringing across the continent,
Your masculine voice O year, as rising amid the great cities,
Amid the men of Manhattan I saw you as one of the workmen, the dwellers in Manhattan,
Or with large steps crossing the prairies out of Illinois and Indiana,
Rapidly crossing the West with springy gait and descending the Alleghanies,
Or down from the great lakes or in Pennsylvania, or on deck along the Ohio river,
Or southward along the Tennessee or Cumberland rivers, or at Chattanooga on the mountain top,
Saw I your gait and saw I your sinewy limbs clothed in blue, bearing weapons, robust year,

Heard your determin'd voice launch'd forth again and again,
Year that suddenly sang by the mouths of the round-lipp'd cannon,
I repeat you, hurrying, crashing, sad, distracted year.

1865

CAVALRY CROSSING A FORD

A line in long array where they wind betwixt green islands,
They take a serpentine course, their arms flash in the sun—hark to the musical clank,
Behold the silvery river, in it the splashing horses loitering stop to drink,
Behold the brown-faced men, each group, each person a picture, the negligent rest on the saddles,
Some emerge on the opposite bank, others are just entering the ford—while,
Scarlet and blue and snowy white,
The guidon[1] flags flutter gayly in the wind.

1865

BIVOUAC ON A MOUNTAIN SIDE

I see before me now a traveling army halting,
Below a fertile valley spread, with barns and the orchards of summer,
Behind, the terraced sides of a mountain, abrupt, in places rising high,
Broken, with rocks, with clinging cedars, with tall shapes dingily seen,
The numerous camp-fires scatter'd near and far, some away up on the mountain,
The shadowy forms of men and horses, looming, large-sized, flickering,
And over all the sky—the sky! far, far out of reach, studded, breaking out, the eternal stars.

1865

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[1] One of the most noble phases of Whitman's life was his work in the hospitals of Washington during the entire Civil War. He so gave of his strength and spirit to the suffering and dying soldiers that they came to look upon him as almost an angel of mercy.

[1] A pennant-like guide flag used especially by mounted troops.

COME UP FROM THE FIELDS FATHER

Come up from the fields father, here's a letter from our Pete,
And come to the front door mother, here's a letter from thy dear son.

Lo, 'tis autumn,
Lo, where the trees, deeper green, yellower and redder,
Cool and sweeten Ohio's villages with leaves fluttering in the moderate wind,
Where apples ripe in the orchards hang and grapes on the trellis'd vines,
(Smell you the smell of the grapes on the vines?
Smell you the buckwheat where the bees were lately buzzing?)

Above all, lo, the sky so calm, so transparent after the rain, and with wondrous clouds,
Below too, all calm, all vital and beautiful, and the farm prospers well.

Down in the fields all prospers well,
But now from the fields come father, come at the daughter's call,
And come to the entry mother, to the front door come right away.

Fast as she can she hurries, something ominous, her steps trembling,
She does not tarry to smooth her hair nor adjust her cap.

Open the envelope quickly,
O this is not our son's writing, yet his name is sign'd,
O a strange hand writes for our dear son, O stricken mother's soul!
All swims before her eyes, flashes with black, she catches the main words only,
Sentences broken, *gunshot wound in the breast, cavalry skirmish, taken to hospital,*
At present low, but will soon be better.

Ah now the single figure to me,
Amid all teeming and wealthy Ohio with all its cities and farms,
Sickly white in the face and dull in the head, very faint,
By the jamb of a door leans.

Grieve not so, dear mother, (the just-grown daughter speaks through her sobs,
The little sisters huddle around speechless and dismay'd,)
See, dearest mother, the letter says Pete will soon be better.

Alas poor boy, he will never be better, (nor may-be needs to be better, that brave and simple soul,)
While they stand at home at the door he is dead already,
The only son is dead.

But the mother needs to be better,
She with thin form presently drest in black,
By day her meals untouch'd, then at night fitfully sleeping, often waking,
In the midnight waking, weeping, longing with one deep longing,
O that she might withdraw unnoticed, silent from life escape and withdraw,
To follow, to seek, to be with her dear dead son.

1865

A MARCH IN THE RANKS HARD-PREST, AND THE ROAD UNKNOWN[1]

A march in the ranks hard-prest, and the road unknown,
A route through a heavy wood with muffled steps in the darkness,
Our army foil'd with loss severe, and the sullen remnant retreating,
Till after midnight glimmer upon us the lights of a dim-lighted building,
We come to an open space in the woods, and halt by the dim-lighted building,
'Tis a large old church at the crossing roads, now an impromptu hospital,
Entering but for a minute I see a sight beyond all the pictures and poems ever made,
Shadows of deepest, deepest black, just lit by moving candles and lamps,
And by one great pitchy torch stationary with wild red flame and clouds of smoke,
By these, crowds, groups of forms vaguely I see on the floor, some in the pews laid down,
At my feet more distinctly a soldier, a mere lad, in danger of bleeding to death, (he is shot in the abdomen,)

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[1] Is Whitman's unflinching realism in his war poetry as shown in this poem and also in *The Wound-dresser*, due to lack of delicacy or to a fuller and more exact sense of the horrors of war than most poets have had the means of acquiring?

I stanch the blood temporarily, (the youngster's face is white as a lily,)
Then before I depart I sweep my eyes o'er the scene fain to absorb it all,
Faces, varieties, postures beyond description, most in obscurity, some of them dead,
Surgeons operating, attendants holding lights, the smell of ether, the odor of blood,
The crowd, O the crowd of the bloody forms, the yard outside also fill'd,
Some on the bare ground, some on planks or stretchers, some in the death-spasm sweating,
An occasional scream or cry, the doctor's shouted orders or calls,
The glisten of the little steel instruments catching the glint of the torches,
These I resume as I chant, I see again the forms, I smell the odor,
Then hear outside the orders given, *Fall in, my men, fall in;*
But first I bend to the dying lad, his eyes open, a half-smile gives he me,
Then the eyes close, calmly close, and I speed forth to the darkness,
Resuming, marching, ever in darkness marching, on in the ranks,
The unknown road still marching.

1865

A SIGHT IN CAMP IN THE DAYBREAK GRAY AND DIM

A sight in camp in the daybreak gray and dim,
As from my tent I emerge so early sleepless,
As slow I walk in the cool fresh air the path near by the hospital tent,
Three forms I see on stretchers lying, brought out there untended lying,
Over each the blanket spread, ample brownish woolen blanket,
Gray and heavy blanket, folding, covering all.

Curious I halt and silent stand,
Then with light fingers I from the face of the nearest the first just lift the blanket;
Who are you elderly man so gaunt and grim, with well-gray'd hair, and flesh all sunken about the eyes?
Who are you my dear comrade?

Then to the second I step—and who are you my child and darling?
Who are you sweet boy with cheeks yet blooming?
Then to the third—a face nor child nor old, very calm, as of beautiful yellow-white ivory;
Young man I think I know you—I think this face is the face of the Christ himself,
Dead and divine and brother of all, and here again he lies.

1865

AS TOILSOME I WANDER'D VIRGINIA'S WOODS

As toilsome I wander'd Virginia's woods,
To the music of rustling leaves kick'd by my feet, (for 'twas autumn),
I mark'd at the foot of a tree the grave of a soldier;
Mortally wounded he and buried on the retreat, (easily all could I understand),
The halt of a mid-day hour, when up! no time to lose—yet this sign left,
On a tablet scrawl'd and nail'd on the tree by the grave,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

Long, long I muse, then on my way go wandering,
Many a changeful season to follow, and many a scene of life,
Yet at times through changeful season and scene, abrupt, alone, or in the crowded street,
Comes before me the unknown soldier's grave, comes the inscription rude in Virginia's woods,
Bold, cautious, true, and my loving comrade.

1865

THE WOUND-DRESSER

1

An old man bending I come among new faces,
Years looking backward resuming in answer to children,
Come tell us old man, as from young men and maidens that love me,
(Arous'd and angry, I'd thought to beat the alarum, and urge relentless war,
But soon my fingers fail'd me, my face droop'd and I resign'd myself,
To sit by the wounded and soothe them, or silently watch the dead;)
Years hence of these scenes, of these furious passions, these chances,

Of unsurpass'd heroes, (was one side so brave? the other was equally brave;)
Now be witness again, paint the mightiest armies of earth,
Of those armies so rapid so wondrous what saw you to tell us?
What stays with you latest and deepest? of curious panics,
Of hard-fought engagements or sieges tremendous what deepest remains?

2

O maidens and young men I love and that love me,
What you ask of my days those the strangest and sudden your talking recalls,
Soldier alert I arrive after a long march cover'd with sweat and dust,
In the nick of time I come, plunge in the fight, loudly shout in the rush of successful charge,
Enter the captur'd works—yet lo, like a swift-running river they fade,
Pass and are gone, they fade—I dwell not on soldiers' perils or soldiers' joys,
(Both I remember well—many the hardships, few the joys, yet I was content.)
But in silence, in dreams' projections,
While the world of gain and appearance and mirth goes on,
So soon what is over forgotten, and waves wash the imprints off the sand,
With hinged knees returning I enter the doors, (while for you up there,
Whoever you are, follow without noise and be of strong heart.)

Bearing the bandages, water and sponge,
Straight and swift to my wounded I go,
Where they lie on the ground after the battle brought in,
Where their priceless blood reddens the grass the ground,
Or to the rows of the hospital tent, or under the roof'd hospital,
To the long rows of cots up and down each side I return,
To each and all one after another I draw near, not one do I miss,
An attendant follows holding a tray, he carries a refuse pail,
Soon to be fill'd with clotted rags and blood, emptied, and fill'd again.

I onward go, I stop,
With hinged knees and steady hand to dress wounds,
I am firm with each, the pangs are sharp yet unavoidable,
One turns to me his appealing eyes—poor boy! I never knew you,
Yet I think I could not refuse this moment to die for you, if that would save you.

3

On, on I go, (open doors of time! open hospital doors!)
The crush'd head I dress, (poor crazed hand tear not the bandage away,)
The neck of the cavalry-man with the bullet through and through I examine,
Hard the breathing rattles, quite glazed already the eye, yet life struggles hard,
(Come sweet death! be persuaded O beautiful death!
In mercy come quickly.)

From the stump of the arm, the amputated hand,
I undo the clotted lint, remove the slough, wash off the matter and blood,
Back on his pillow the soldier bends with curv'd neck and side-falling head,
His eyes are closed, his face is pale, he dares not look on the bloody stump,
And has not yet look'd on it.

I dress a wound in the side, deep, deep,
But a day or two more, for see the frame all wasted and sinking,
And the yellow-blue countenance see.

I dress the perforated shoulder, the foot with the bullet-wound,
Cleanse the one with a gnawing and putrid gangrene, so sickening, so offensive,
While the attendant stands behind aside me holding the tray and pail.

I am faithful, I do not give out,
The fractur'd thigh, the knee, the wound in the abdomen,
These and more I dress with impassive hand, (yet deep in my breast a fire, a burning flame).

4

Thus in silence in dreams' projections,
Returning, resuming, I thread my way through the hospitals,
The hurt and wounded I pacify with soothing hand,
I sit by the restless all the dark night, some are so young,

Some suffer so much, I recall the experience sweet and sad,
(Many a soldier's loving arms about this neck have cross'd and rested,
Many a soldier's kiss dwells on these bearded lips).

1865

GIVE ME THE SPLENDID SILENT SUN

1

Give me the splendid silent sun with all his beams full-dazzling,
Give me juicy autumnal fruit ripe and red from the orchard,
Give me a field where the unmow'd grass grows,
Give me an arbor, give me the trellis'd grape,
Give me fresh corn and wheat, give me serene-moving animals teaching content,
Give me nights perfectly quiet as on high plateaus west of the Mississippi, and I looking up at the stars,
Give me odorous at sunrise a garden of beautiful flowers where I can walk undisturb'd,
Give me for marriage a sweet-breath'd woman of whom I should never tire,
Give me a perfect child, give me away aside from the noise of the world a rural domestic life,
Give me to warble spontaneous songs recluse by myself, for my own ears only,
Give me solitude, give me Nature, give me again O Nature your primal sanities!

These demanding to have them, (tired with ceaseless excitement, and rack'd by the war-strife,)
These to procure incessantly asking, rising in cries from my heart,
While yet incessantly asking still I adhere to my city,
Day upon day and year upon year O city, walking your streets,
Where you hold me enchain'd a certain time refusing to give me up,
Yet giving to make me glutted, enrich'd of soul, you give me forever faces;
(O I see what I sought to escape, confronting, reversing my cries,
I see my own soul trampling down what it ask'd for.)

2

Keep your splendid silent sun,
Keep your woods O Nature, and the quiet places by the woods,
Keep your fields of clover and timothy, and your corn-fields and orchards,
Keep the blossoming buckwheat fields where the Ninth-month bees hum;
Give me faces and streets—give me these phantoms incessant and endless along the trottoirs![1]
Give me interminable eyes—give me women—give me comrades and lovers by the thousand!
Let me see new ones every day—let me hold new ones by the hand every day!
Give me such shows—give me the streets of Manhattan!
Give me Broadway, with the soldiers marching—give me the sound of the trumpets and drums!
(The soldiers in companies or regiments—some starting away, flush'd and reckless,
Some, their time up, returning with thinn'd ranks, young, yet very old, worn, marching, noticing nothing;)
Give me the shores and wharves heavy-fringed with black ships!
O such for me! O an intense life, full to repletion and varied!
The life of the theater, bar-room, huge hotel, for me!
The saloon of the steamer! the crowded excursion for me! the torchlight procession!
The dense brigade bound for the war, with high piled military wagons following;
People, endless, streaming, with strong voices, passions, pageants,
Manhattan streets with their powerful throbs, with beating drums as now,
The endless and noisy chorus, the rustle and clank of muskets, (even the sight of the wounded,)
Manhattan crowds, with their turbulent musical chorus!
Manhattan faces and eyes forever for me.

1865

O TAN-FACED PRAIRIE-BOY

O tan-faced prairie-boy,
Before you came to camp came many a welcome gift,

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[1] side-walks

Praises and presents came and nourishing food, till at last among the recruits,
You came, taciturn, with nothing to give—we but look'd on each other,
When lo! more than all the gifts of the world you gave me.

1865

LOOK DOWN FAIR MOON

Look down fair moon and bathe this scene,
Pour softly down night's nimbus floods on faces ghastly, swollen, purple,
On the dead on their backs with arms toss'd wide,
Pour down your unstinted nimbus sacred moon.

1865

RECONCILIATION

Word over all, beautiful as the sky,
Beautiful that war and all its deeds of carnage must in time be utterly lost,
That the hands of the sisters Death and Night incessantly softly wash again, and ever again, this soil'd world;
For my enemy is dead, a man divine as myself is dead,
I look where he lies white-faced and still in the coffin—I draw near,
Bend down and touch lightly with my lips the white face in the coffin.

1865

WEAVE IN, MY HARDY LIFE

Weave in, weave in, my hardy life,
Weave yet a soldier strong and full for great campaigns to come,
Weave in red blood, weave sinews in like ropes, the senses, sight weave in,
Weave lasting sure, weave day and night the weft, the warp, incessant weave, tire not,
(We know not what the use O life, nor know the aim, the end, nor really aught we know,
But know the work, the need goes on and shall go on, the death envelop'd march of peace as well as war goes on,)
For great campaigns of peace the same the wiry threads to weave,
We know not why or what, yet weave, forever weave.

1865

OUT OF THE ROLLING OCEAN THE CROWD

Out of the rolling ocean the crowd came a drop gently to me,
Whispering, *I love you, before long I die,*
I have travel'd a long way merely to look on you to touch you,
For I could not die till I once look'd on you,
For I fear'd I might afterward lose you.

Now we have met, we have look'd, we are safe,
Return in peace to the ocean my love,
I too am part of that ocean my love, we are not so much separated,
Behold the great rondure, the cohesion of all, how perfect!
But as for me, for you, the irresistible sea is to separate us,
As for an hour carrying us diverse, yet cannot carry us diverse forever;
Be not impatient—a little space—know you I salute the air, the ocean and the land,
Every day at sundown for your dear sake my love.

1865

TO A CERTAIN CIVILIAN

Did you ask dulcet rimes from me?
Did you seek the civilian's peaceful and languishing rimes?
Did you find what I sang erewhile so hard to follow?
Why I was not singing erewhile for you to follow, to understand—nor am I now;
(I have been born of the same as the war was born,
The drum-corps' rattle is ever to me sweet music, I love well the martial dirge,
With slow wail and convulsive throb leading the officer's funeral;)
What to such as you anyhow such a poet as I? therefore leave my works,
And go lull yourself with what you can understand, and with piano tunes,
For I lull nobody, and you will never understand me.

1865

QUICKSAND YEARS

Quicksand years that whirl me I know not whither,
Your schemes, politics, fail, lines give way, substances mock and elude me,
Only the theme I sing, the great and strong-possess'd soul, eludes not,

One's-self must never give way—that is the final substance—that out of all is sure,
Out of politics, triumphs, battles, life, what at last finally remains?
When shows break up what but One's-Self is sure?

1865

ASHES OF SOLDIERS

Ashes of soldiers South or North,
As I muse retrospective murmuring a chant in thought,
The war resumes, again to my sense your shapes,
And again the advance of the armies.

Noiseless as mists and vapors,
From their graves in the trenches ascending,
From cemeteries all through Virginia and Tennessee,
From every point of the compass out of the countless graves,
In wafted clouds, in myriads large, or squads of twos or threes or single ones they come,
And silently gather round me.

Now sound no note O trumpeters,
Not at the head of my cavalry parading on spirited horses,
With sabers drawn and glistening, and carbines by their thighs, (ah my brave horsemen!
My handsome tan-faced horsemen! what life, what joy and pride,
With all the perils were yours.)

Nor you drummers, neither at reveillé at dawn,
Nor the long roll alarming the camp, nor even the muffled beat for a burial,
Nothing from you this time O drummers bearing my warlike drums.

But aside from these and the marts of wealth and the crowded promenade,
Admitting around me comrades close unseen by the rest and voiceless,
The slain elate and alive again, the dust and debris alive,
I chant this chant of my silent soul in the name of all dead soldiers.

Faces so pale with wondrous eyes, very dear, gather closer yet,
Draw close, but speak not.

Phantoms of countless lost,
Invisible to the rest henceforth become my companions,
Follow me ever—desert me not while I live.

Sweet are the blooming cheeks of the living—sweet are the musical voices sounding,
But sweet, ah sweet, are the dead with their silent eyes.

Dearest comrades, all is over and long gone,
But love is not over—and what love, O comrades!
Perfume from battlefields rising, up from the fœtor arising.

Perfume therefore my chant, O love, immortal love,
Give me to bathe the memories of all dead soldiers,
Shroud them, embalm them, cover them all over with tender pride.

Perfume all—make all wholesome,
Make these ashes to nourish and blossom,
O love, solve all, fructify all with the last chemistry.

Give me exhaustless, make me a fountain,
That I exhale love from me wherever I go like a moist perennial dew,
For the ashes of all dead soldiers South or North.

1865

PENSIVE ON HER DEAD GAZING

Pensive on her dead gazing I heard the Mother of All,
Desperate on the torn bodies, on the forms covering the battlefields gazing,
(As the last gun ceased, but the scent of the powder-smoke linger'd,)
As she call'd to her earth with mournful voice while she stalk'd,
Absorb them well O my earth, she cried, I charge you lose not my sons, lose not an atom,
And you streams absorb them well, taking their dear blood,
And you local spots, and you airs that swim above lightly impalpable,
And all you essences of soil and growth, and you my rivers' depths,
And you mountain sides, and the woods where my dear children's blood trickling redden'd,
And you trees down in your roots to bequeath to all future trees,

My dead absorb or South or North—my young men's bodies absorb, and their precious precious blood,
Which holding in trust for me faithfully back again give me many a year hence,
In unseen essence and odor of surface and grass, centuries hence,
In blowing airs from the fields back again give me my darlings, give my immortal heroes,
Exhale me them centuries hence, breathe me their breath, let not an atom be lost,
O years and graves! O air and soil! O my dead, an aroma sweet!
Exhale them perennial sweet death, years, centuries hence.

1865

HUSH'D BE THE CAMPS TODAY[1]

(*May* 4, 1865)

Hush'd be the camps today,
And soldiers let us drape our war-worn weapons,
And each with musing soul retire to celebrate,
Our dear commander's death.

No more for him life's stormy conflicts,
Nor victory, nor defeat—no more time's dark events,
Charging like ceaseless clouds across the sky.

But sing poet in our name,
Sing of the love we bore him—because you, dweller in camps, know it truly.

As they invault the coffin there,
Sing—as they close the doors of earth upon him—one verse,
For the heavy hearts of soldiers.

1865

BEAT! BEAT! DRUMS!

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Through the windows—through doors—burst like a ruthless force,
Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation,
Into the school where the scholar is studying;
Leave not the bridegroom quiet—no happiness must he have now with his bride,
Nor the peaceful farmer any peace, plowing his field or gathering his grain,
So fierce you whirr and pound you drums—so shrill you bugles blow.

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Over the traffic of cities—over the rumble of wheels in the streets;
Are beds prepared for sleepers at night in the houses? no sleepers must sleep in those beds,
No bargainers' bargains by day—no brokers or speculators—would they continue?
Would the talkers be talking? would the singer attempt to sing?
Would the lawyer rise in the court to state his case before the judge?
Then rattle quicker, heavier drums—you bugles wilder blow.

Beat! beat! drums!—blow! bugles! blow!
Make no parley—stop for no expostulation,
Mind not the timid—mind not the weeper or prayer,
Mind not the old man beseeching the young man,
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties,
Make even the trestles to shake the dead where they lie awaiting the hearses,
So strong you thump O terrible drums—so loud you bugles blow.

1865

WHEN LILACS LAST IN THE DOORYARD BLOOM'D

1

When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd,
And the great star early droop'd in the western sky in the night,
I mourn'd, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.

Ever-returning spring, trinity sure to me you bring,
Lilac blooming perennial and drooping star in the west,
And thought of him I love.

2

O powerful western fallen star!
O shades of night—O moody, tearful night!

---

[1] This poem and the three following have reference to the death and burial of Abraham Lincoln, whose body was taken slowly, with pauses and sometimes funeral sermons, at almost every town on the route, to Springfield, Illinois, where the entombment took place May 5, 1865.

O great star disappear'd—O the black murk that hides the star!
O cruel hands that hold me powerless—O helpless soul of me!
O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul.

3

In the dooryard fronting an old farm-house near the white-wash'd palings,
Stands the lilac-bush tall-growing with heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
With many a pointed blossom rising delicate, with the perfume strong I love,
With every leaf a miracle—and from this bush in the dooryard,
With delicate-color'd blossoms and heart-shaped leaves of rich green,
A sprig with its flower I break.

4

In the swamp in secluded recesses,
A shy and hidden bird is warbling a song.

Solitary the thrush,
The hermit withdrawn to himself, avoiding the settlements,
Sings by himself a song.

Song of the bleeding throat,
Death's outlet song of life, (for well dear brother I know,
If thou wast not granted to sing thou would'st surely die.)

5

Over the breast of the spring, the land, amid cities,
Amid lanes and through old woods, where lately the violets peep'd from the ground, spotting the gray debris,
Amid the grass in the fields each side of the lanes, passing the endless grass,
Passing the yellow-spear'd wheat, every grain from its shroud in the dark-brown fields uprisen,
Passing the apple-tree blows of white and pink in the orchards,
Carrying a corpse to where it shall rest in the grave,
Night and day journeys a coffin.

6

Coffin that passes through lanes and streets,
Through day and night with the grea cloud darkening the land,
With the pomp of the inloop'd flags with the cities draped in black,
With the show of the States themselves a of crape-veil'd women standing,
With processions long and winding and the flambeaus of the night,
With the countless torches lit, with the silent sea of faces and the unbared heads,
With the waiting depot, the arriving coffin, and the somber faces,
With dirges through the night, with the thousand voices rising strong and solemn,
With all the mournful voices of the dirges pour'd around the coffin,
The dim-lit churches and the shuddering organs—where amid these you journey,
With the tolling tolling bells' perpetual clang,
Here, coffin that slowly passes,
I give you my sprig of lilac.

7

(Nor for you, for one alone,
Blossoms and branches green to coffins all I bring,
For fresh as the morning, thus would I chant a song for you O sane and sacred death.

All over bouquets of roses,
O death, I cover you over with roses and early lilies,
But mostly and now the lilac that blooms the first,
Copious I break, I break the sprigs from the bushes,
With loaded arms I come, pouring for you,
For you and the coffins all of you O death.)

8

O western orb sailing the heaven,
Now I know what you must have meant as a month since I walk'd,
As I walk'd in silence the transparent shadowy night,
As I saw you had something to tell as you bent to me night after night,
As you droop'd from the sky low down as if to my side, (while the other stars all look'd on,)
As we wander'd together the solemn night, (for something I know not what kept me from sleep,)

As the night advanced, and I saw on the rim of the west how full you were of woe,
As I stood on the rising ground in the breeze in the cool transparent night,
As I watch'd where you pass'd and was lost in the netherward black of the night,
As my soul in its trouble dissatisfied sank, as where you sad orb,
Concluded, dropt in the night, and was gone.

9

Sing on there in the swamp,
O singer bashful and tender, I hear your notes, I hear your call,
I hear, I come presently, I understand you,
But a moment I linger, for the lustrous star has detain'd me,
The star my departing comrade holds and detains me.

10

O how shall I warble myself for the dead one there I loved?
And how shall I deck my song for the large sweet soul that has gone?
And what shall my perfume be for the grave of him I love?

Sea-winds blown from east and west,
Blown from the Eastern sea and blown from the Western sea, till there on the prairies meeting,
These and with these and the breath of my chant,
I'll perfume the grave of him I love.

11

O what shall I hang on the chamber walls?
And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,
To adorn the burial-house of him I love?

Pictures of growing spring and farms and homes,
With the Fourth-month eve at sundown, and the gray smoke lucid and bright,
With floods of the yellow gold of the gorgeous, indolent, sinking sun, burning, expanding the air,
With the fresh sweet herbage under foot, and the pale green leaves of the trees prolific,
In the distance the flowing glaze, the breast of the river, with a wind-dapple here and there,
With ranging hills on the banks, with many a line against the sky, and shadows,
And the city at hand with dwellings so dense, and stacks of chimneys,
And all the scenes of life and the workshops, and the workmen homeward returning.

12

Lo, body and soul—this land,
My own Manhattan with spires, and the sparkling and hurrying tides, and the ships,
The varied and ample land, the South and the North in the light, Ohio's shores and flashing Missouri,
And ever the far-spreading prairies cover'd with grass and corn.

Lo, the most excellent sun so calm and haughty,
The violet and purple morn with just-felt breezes,
The gentle soft-born measureless light,
The miracle spreading bathing all, the fulfill'd noon,
The coming eve delicious, the welcome night and the stars,
Over my cities shining all, enveloping man and land.

13

Sing on, sing on you gray-brown bird,
Sing from the swamps, the recesses, pour your chant from the bushes,
Limitless out of the dusk, out of the cedars and pines.

Sing on dearest brother, warble your reedy song,
Loud human song, with voice of uttermost woe.

O liquid and free and tender!
O wild and loose to my soul—O wondrous singer!
You only I hear—yet the star holds me, (but will soon depart,)
Yet the lilac with mastering odor holds me.

14

Now while I sat in the day and look'd forth,
In the close of the day with its light and the fields of spring, and the farmers preparing their crops,

In the large unconscious scenery of my land with its lakes and forests,
In the heavenly aerial beauty, (after the perturb'd winds and the storms,)
Under the arching heavens of the afternoon swift passing, and the voices of children and women,
The many-moving sea-tides, and I saw the ships how they sail'd,
And the summer approaching with richness, and the fields all busy with labor,
And the infinite separate houses, how they all went on, each with its meals and minutia of daily usages,
And the streets how their throbbings throbb'd, and the cities pent—lo, then and there,
Falling upon them all and among them all, enveloping me with the rest,
Appear'd the cloud, appear'd the long black trail,
And I knew death, its thought, and the sacred knowledge of death.

Then with the knowledge of death as walking one side of me,
And the thought of death close-walking the other side of me,
And I in the middle as with companions, and as holding the hands of companions,
I fled forth to the hiding receiving night that talks not,
Down to the shores of the water, the path by the swamp in the dimness,
To the solemn shadowy cedars and ghostly pines so still.

And the singer so shy to the rest receiv'd me,
The gray-brown bird I know receiv'd us comrades three,
And he sang the carol of death, and a verse for him I love.

From deep secluded recesses,
From the fragrant cedars and the ghostly pines so still,
Came the carol of the bird.

And the charm of the carol rapt me,
As I held as if by their hands my comrades in the night,
And the voice of my spirit tallied the song of the bird.

Come lovely and soothing death,[1]
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later delicate death.

Prais'd be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.

Dark mother always gliding near with soft feet,
Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?
Then I chant it for thee, I glorify thee above all,
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come unfalteringly.

Approach strong deliveress,
When it is so, when thou hast taken them I joyously sing the dead,
Lost in the loving floating ocean of thee,
Laved in the flood of thy bliss O death.

From me to thee glad serenades,
Dances for thee I propose saluting thee, adornments and feastings for thee,
And the sights of the open landscape and the high-spread sky are fitting,
And life and the fields, and the huge and thoughtful night.

The night in silence under many a star,
The ocean shore and the husky whispering wave whose voice I know,
And the soul turning to thee O vast and well-veil'd death,
And the body gratefully nestling close to thee.

Over the tree-tops I float thee a song,
Over the rising and sinking waves, over the myriad fields and the prairies wide,
Over the dense-pack'd cities all and the teeming wharves and ways,
I float this carol with joy, with joy to thee O death.

[1] Compare "O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! Whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised; thou hast called together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet!*" Sir Walter Raleigh, *The History of the World.*

15

To the tally of my soul,
Loud and strong kept up the gray-brown bird,
With pure deliberate notes spreading filling the night.

Loud in the pines and cedars dim;
Clear in the freshness moist and the swamp-perfume,
And I with my comrades there in the night.

While my sight that was bound in my eyes unclosed,
As to long panoramas of visions.

And I saw askant the armies,
I saw as in noiseless dreams hundreds of battle-flags,
Borne through the smoke of the battles and pierc'd with missiles I saw them,
And carried hither and yon through the smoke, and torn and bloody,
And at last but a few shreds left on the staffs, (and all in silence,)
And the staffs all splinter'd and broken.

I saw battle-corpses, myriads of them,
And the white skeletons of young men, I saw them,
I saw the debris and debris of all the slain soldiers of the war,
But I saw they were not as was thought,
They themselves were fully at rest, they suffer'd not,
The living remain'd and suffer'd, the mother suffer'd,
And the wife and the child and the musing comrade suffer'd,
And the armies that remain'd suffer'd.

16

Passing the visions, passing the night,
Passing, unloosing the hold of my comrades' hands,
Passing the song of the hermit bird and the tallying song of my soul,
Victorious song, death's outlet song, yet varying ever-altering song,
As low and wailing, yet clear the notes, rising and falling, flooding the night,
Sadly sinking and fainting, as warning and warning, and yet again bursting with joy,
Covering the earth and filling the spread of the heaven,
As that powerful psalm in the night I heard from recesses,
Passing, I leave thee lilac with heart-shaped leaves,
I leave thee there in the door-yard, blooming, returning with spring.

I cease from my song for thee,
From my gaze on thee in the west, fronting the west, communing with thee,
O comrade lustrous with silver face in the night.

Yet each to keep and all, retrievements out of the night,
The song, the wondrous chant of the gray-brown bird,
And the tallying chant, the echo arous'd in my soul,
With the lustrous and drooping star with the countenance full of woe,
With the holders holding my hand nearing the call of the bird,
Comrades mine and I in the midst, and their memory ever to keep, for the dead I loved so well,
For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands—and this for his dear sake,
Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul,
There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim.

1865

O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN![1]

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
  But O heart! heart! heart!
    O the bleeding drops of red,
      Where on the deck my Captain lies,
        Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,

---

[1] In this and a few other poems Whitman brings his work more nearly into the conventional poetic form. Does a study of these more regular pieces indicate that Whitman could or could not have expressed himself successfully in the prevailing artistic forms?

For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

1865-6

AN ARMY CORPS ON THE MARCH

With its cloud of skirmishers in advance,
With now the sound of a single shot snapping like a whip, and now an irregular volley,
The swarming ranks press on and on, the dense brigades press on,
Glittering dimly, toiling under the sun—the dust-cover'd men,
In columns rise and fall to the undulations of the ground,
With artillery interspers'd—the wheels rumble, the horses sweat,
As the army corps advances.

1865-6

ONE'S-SELF I SING[1]

ONE'S-SELF I sing, a simple separate person,
Yet utter the word Democratic, the word En-Masse.

Of physiology from top to toe I sing,
Not physiognomy alone nor brain alone is worthy for the Muse, I say the Form complete is worthier far,
The Female equally with the Male I sing.

Of Life immense in passion, pulse, and power,
Cheerful, for freest action form'd under the laws divine,
The Modern Man I sing.

1867

DAREST THOU NOW O SOUL

Darest thou now O soul,
Walk out with me toward the unknown region,
Where neither ground is for the feet nor any path to follow?

No map there, nor guide,
Nor voice sounding, nor touch of human hand,
Nor face with blooming flesh, nor lips, nor eyes, are in that land.

I know it not O soul,
Nor dost thou, all is a blank before us,
All waits undream'd of in that region, that inaccessible land.

Till when the ties loosen,
All but the ties eternal, Time and Space,
Nor darkness, gravitation, sense, nor any bounds bounding us.

Then we burst forth, we float,
In Time and Space O soul, prepared for them,
Equal, equipt at last, (O joy! O fruit of all!) them to fulfil O soul.

1870

A NOISELESS PATIENT SPIDER

A noiseless patient spider,
I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,
Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,
It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself,
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you O my soul where you stand,
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres to connect them,
Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile anchor hold,
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul.

1870

THE LAST INVOCATION

At the last, tenderly,
From the walls of the powerful fortress'd house,
From the clasp of the knitted locks, from the keep of the well-closed doors,
Let me be wafted.

---

[1] This poem Whitman placed at the beginning of his final revised edition of his poems.

Let me glide noiselessly forth;
With the key of softness unlock the locks—with a whisper,
Set ope the doors O soul.

Tenderly—be not impatient,
(Strong is your hold O mortal flesh,
Strong is your hold O love.)

1870

ETHIOPIA SALUTING THE COLORS

Who are you dusky woman, so ancient hardly human,
With your woolly-white and turban'd head, and bare bony feet?
Why rising by the roadside here, do you the colors greet?

('Tis while our army lines Carolina's sands and pines,
Forth from thy hovel door thou Ethiopia com'st to me,
As under doughty Sherman I march toward the sea.)

Me master years a hundred since from my parents sunder'd,
A little child, they caught me as the savage beast is caught,
Then hither me across the sea the cruel slaver brought.

No further does she say, but lingering all the day,
Her high-borne turban'd head she wags, and rolls her darkling eye,
And courtesies to the regiments, the guidons moving by.

What is it fateful woman, so blear, hardly human?
Why wag your head with turban bound yellow, red and green?
Are the things so strange and marvelous you see or have seen?

1870

JOY, SHIPMATE, JOY!

Joy, shipmate, joy!
(Pleas'd to my soul at death I cry,)
Our life is closed, our life begins,
The long, long anchorage we leave,
The ship is clear at last, she leaps!
She swiftly courses from the shore,
Joy, shipmate, joy!

1870

THE MYSTIC TRUMPETER

1

Hark, some wild trumpeter, some strange musician,
Hovering unseen in air, vibrates capricious tunes tonight.

I hear thee trumpeter, listening alert I catch thy notes,
Now pouring, whirling like a tempest round me,
Now low, subdued, now in the distance lost.

2

Come nearer bodiless one, haply in thee resounds
Some dead composer, haply thy pensive life
Was fill'd with aspirations high, unform'd ideals,
Waves, oceans musical, chaotically surging,
That now ecstatic ghost, close to me bending, thy cornet echoing, pealing,
Gives out to no one's ears but mine, but freely gives to mine,
That I may thee translate.

3

Blow trumpeter free and clear, I follow thee,
While at thy liquid prelude, glad, serene,
The fretting world, the streets, the noisy hours of day withdraw,
A holy calm descends like dew upon me,
I walk in cool refreshing night the walks of Paradise,
I scent the grass, the moist air and the roses;
Thy song expands my numb'd imbonded spirit, thou freest, launchest me,
Floating and basking upon heaven's lake.

4

Blow again trumpeter! and for my sensuous eyes,
Bring the old pageants, show the feudal world.
What charm thy music works! thou makest pass before me,
Ladies and cavaliers long dead, barons are in their castle halls, the troubadours are singing,

Arm'd knights go forth to redress wrongs, some in quest of the holy Graal;[1]
I see the tournament, I see the contestants incased in heavy armor seated on stately champing horses,
I hear the shouts, the sounds of blows and smiting steel;
I see the Crusaders' tumultuous armies—hark, how the cymbals clang,
Lo, where the monks walk in advance, bearing the cross on high.

5

Blow again trumpeter! and for thy theme,
Take now the enclosing theme of all, the solvent and the setting,
Love, that is pulse of all, the sustenance and the pang,
The heart of man and woman all for love,
No other theme but love—knitting, enclosing, all-diffusing love.

O how the immortal phantoms crowd around me!
I see the vast alembic[2] ever working, I see and know the flames that heat the world,
The glow, the blush, the beating hearts of lovers,
So blissful happy some, and some so silent, dark, and nigh to death;
Love, that is all the earth to lovers—love, that mocks time and space,
Love, that is day and night—love, that is sun and moon and stars,
Love, that is crimson, sumptuous, sick with perfume,
No other words but words of love, no other thought but love.

6

Blow again trumpeter—conjure war's alarums.

Swift to thy spell a shuddering hum like distant thunder rolls,
Lo, where the arm'd men hasten—lo, mid the clouds of dust the glint of bayonets,
I see the grime-faced cannoneers, I mark the rosy flash amid the smoke, I hear the cracking of the guns;
Nor war alone—thy fearful music-song, wild player, brings every sight of fear,
The deeds of ruthless brigands, rapine, murder—I hear the cries for help!
I see ships foundering at sea, I behold on deck and below deck the terrible tableaus.

7

O trumpeter, methinks I am myself the instrument thou playest,
Thou melt'st my heart, my brain—thou movest, drawest, changest them at will;
And now thy sullen notes send darkness through me,
Thou takest away all cheering light, all hope,
I see the enslaved, the overthrown, the hurt, the opprest of the whole earth,
I feel the measureless shame and humiliation of my race, it becomes all mine,
Mine too the revenges of humanity, the wrongs of ages, baffled feuds and hatreds,
Utter defeat upon me weighs—all lost—the foe victorious,
(Yet 'mid the ruins Pride colossal stands unshaken to the last,
Endurance, resolution to the last.)

8

Now trumpeter for thy close,
Vouchsafe a higher strain than any yet,
Sing to my soul, renew its languishing faith and hope,
Rouse up my slow belief, give me some vision of the future,
Give me for once its prophecy and joy.

O glad, exulting, culminating song!
A vigor more than earth's is in thy notes,
Marches of victory—man disenthral'd—the conqueror at last,
Hymns to the universal God from universal man—all joy!
A reborn race appears—a perfect world, all joy!
Women and men in wisdom innocence and health—all joy!
Riotous laughing bacchanals fill'd with joy!
War, sorrow, suffering gone—the rank earth purged—nothing but joy left!
The ocean fill'd with joy—the atmosphere all joy!

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[1] The cup from which it was believed Christ drank at the last supper. Legend represented it as having vanished from earth, but as appearing at times to the pure in heart. See note 7, p. 684.

[2] An old-time chemical vessel used for distillation; hence a change-producing agent.

Joy! joy! in freedom, worship, love! joy in the ecstasy of life!
Enough to merely be! enough to breathe!
Joy! joy! all over joy!

1872

YOUTH, DAY, OLD AGE, AND NIGHT

Youth, large, lusty, loving—youth full of grace, force, fascination,
Do you know that Old Age may come after you with equal grace, force, fascination?

Day full-blown and splendid—day of the immense sun, action, ambition, laughter,
The Night follows close with millions of suns, and sleep and restoring darkness.

TO THE MAN-OF-WAR-BIRD[1]

Thou who hast slept all night upon the storm,
Waking renew'd on thy prodigious pinions,
(Burst the wild storm? above it thou ascended'st,
And rested on the sky, thy slave that cradled thee,)
Now a blue point, far, far in heaven floating,
As to the light emerging here on deck I watch thee,
(Myself a speck, a point on the world's floating vast.)

Far, far at sea,
After the night's fierce drifts have strewn the shore with wrecks,
With re-appearing day as now so happy and serene,
The rosy and elastic dawn, the flashing sun,
The limpid spread of air cerulean,
Thou also re-appearest.

Thou born to match the gale, (thou art all wings,)
To cope with heaven and earth and sea and hurricane,
Thou ship of air that never furl'st thy sails,
Days, even weeks untired and onward, through spaces, realms gyrating,
At dusk that look'st on Senegal,[2] at morn America,
That sport'st amid the lightning-flash and thunder-cloud,
In them, in thy experiences, had'st thou my soul,
What joys! what joys were thine!

1876

ITALIAN MUSIC IN DAKOTA

[*"The Seventeenth—the finest Regimental Band I ever heard."*]

Through the soft evening air enwinding all,
Rocks, woods, fort, cannon, pacing sentries, endless wilds,
In dulcet streams, in flutes' and cornets' notes,
Electric, pensive, turbulent, artificial,
(Yet strangely fitting even here, meanings unknown before,
Subtler than ever, more harmony, as if born here, related here,
Not to the city's fresco'd rooms, not to the audience of the opera house,
Sounds, echoes, wandering strains, as really here at home,
Sonnambula's innocent love, trios with *Norma's* anguish,
And thy ecstatic chorus *Poliuto*);[3]
Ray'd in the limpid yellow slanting sundown,
Music, Italian music in Dakota.

While Nature, sovereign of this gnarl'd realm,
Lurking in hidden barbaric grim recesses,
Acknowledging rapport however far remov'd,
(As some old root or soil of earth its last-born flower or fruit,)
Listens well pleas'd.

WITH HUSKY-HAUGHTY LIPS, O SEA!

With husky-haughty lips, O sea!
Where day and night I wend thy surf-beat shore,
Imaging to my sense thy varied strange suggestions,
(I see and plainly list thy talk and conference here),
Thy troops of white-maned racers racing to the goal,
Thy ample, smiling face, dash'd with the sparkling dimples of the sun,
Thy brooding scowl and murk—thy unloos'd hurricanes,
Thy unsubduedness, caprices, wilfulness;
Great as thou art above the rest, thy many tears—a lack from all eternity in thy content,

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[1] Compare with Bryant's *To a Waterfowl*, p. 278, and with Shelley's *To a Skylark*.

[2] A French colony in western Africa.

[3] Italian operas by Bellini and by Donizetti, composers of the nineteenth century.

(Naught but the greatest struggles, wrongs, defeats, could make thee greatest—no less could make thee,)
Thy lonely state—something thou ever seek'st and seek'st, yet never gain'st,
Surely some right withheld—some voice, in huge monotonous rage, of freedom-lover pent,
Some vast heart, like a planet's chain'd and chafing in those breakers,
By lengthen'd swell, and spasm, and panting breath,
And rhythmic rasping of thy sands and waves,
And serpent hiss, and savage peals of laughter,
And undertones of distant lion roar,
(Sounding, appealing to the sky's deaf ear—but now, rapport for once,
A phantom in the night thy confidant for once,)
The first and last confession of the globe,
Outsurging, muttering from thy soul's abysms,
The tale of cosmic elemental passion,
Thou tellest to a kindred soul.

1884

OLD SALT KOSSABONE

Far back, related on my mother's side,
Old Salt Kossabone, I'll tell you how he died:
(Had been a sailor all his life—was nearly 90—lived with his married grandchild, Jenny;
House on a hill, with view of bay at hand, and distant cape, and stretch to open sea;)
The last of afternoons, the evening hours, for many a year his regular custom,
In his great arm chair by the window seated,
(Sometimes, indeed, through half the day,)
Watching the coming, going of the vessels, he mutters to himself—And now the close of all:
One struggling outbound brig, one day, baffled for long—cross-tides and much wrong going,
At last at nightfall strikes the breeze aright, her whole luck veering,
And swiftly bending round the cape, the darkness proudly entering, cleaving, as he watches,
"She's free—she's on her destination"—these the last words—when Jenny came, he sat there dead,
Dutch Kossabone, Old Salt, related on my mother's side, far back.

1888

HERMAN MELVILLE

Born in the city of New York, 1819, died there, 1891. After a good schooling, Melville went to sea at the age of nineteen, and at the age of twenty-two signed articles for a whaling voyage. Deserting in the Marquesas, he spent several years in the Pacific islands. On his return home he rapidly produced several narratives of sea adventure, the most notable being *Typee*, 1846; *Omoo*, 1847; *Mardi*, 1849; *White-Jacket*, 1850; *Moby Dick*, 1851. In *White-Jacket* he so tellingly described flogging in the United States navy as to lead to the prohibition of the punishment. His works brought him great popularity, and he is said to have been Hawthorne's most intimate friend among American men of letters.

TYPEE[1]

CHAPTER X

Midnight Reflections—Morning Visitors—A Warrior in Costume—A Savage Æsculapius—Practice of the Healing Art—Body Servant—A Dwelling-house of the Valley described—Portraits of its Inmates.

Various and conflicting were the thoughts which oppressed me during the silent hours that followed the events related in the preceding chapter. Toby, wearied with the fatigues of the day, slumbered heavily by my side; but the pain under which I was suffering effectually prevented my sleeping, and I remained distressingly alive to all the fearful circumstances of our present situation. Was it possible that after all our vicissitudes we were really in the terrible valley of Typee, and at the mercy of its inmates, a fierce and unrelenting tribe of savages?

Typee or Happar? I shuddered when I reflected that there was no longer any room for doubt; and that, beyond all hope of escape, we were now placed in those very circumstances from the bare thought of which I had recoiled with such abhorrence but a few days before. What might not be our fearful destiny? To be sure, as yet we had been treated with no violence; nay, had been even kindly and hospitably entertained. But what dependence could be placed upon the fickle passions which sway the bosom of a savage? His inconstancy and treachery are proverbial. Might it not be that beneath these fair appearances the islanders covered some perfidious design, and that their friendly reception of us might only precede some horrible catastrophe? How strongly did these forebodings spring up in my mind as I lay restlessly upon a couch of mats, surrounded by the dimly revealed forms of those whom I so greatly dreaded.

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[1] On his whaling voyage Melville found conditions so intolerable that with a single companion, Toby, he deserted at the Marquesas, the two sailors hiding ashore till the ship had sailed. To avoid arrest they plunged into the jungle, but lost their way while seeking the friendly Happar tribe and found themselves after four days captive among the dreaded cannibal tribe of Typee, Melville himself disabled by exposure.

From the excitement of these fearful thoughts I sank towards morning into an uneasy slumber; and on awaking, with a start, in the midst of an appalling dream, looked up into the eager countenances of a number of the natives, who were bending over me.

It was broad day; and the house was nearly filled with young females, fancifully decorated with flowers, who gazed upon me as I rose with faces in which childish delight and curiosity were vividly portrayed. After waking Toby, they seated themselves round us on the mats, and gave full play to that prying inquisitiveness which time out of mind has been attributed to the adorable sex.

As these unsophisticated young creatures were attended by no jealous duennas, their proceedings were altogether informal, and void of artificial restraint. Long and minute was the investigation with which they honored us, and so uproarious their mirth, that I felt infinitely sheepish; and Toby was immeasurably outraged at their familiarity.

These lively young ladies were at the same time wonderfully polite and humane; fanning aside the insects that occasionally lighted on our brows; presenting us with food; and compassionately regarding me in the midst of my afflictions. But in spite of all their blandishments, my feelings of propriety were exceedingly shocked, for I could not but consider them as having overstepped the due limits of female decorum.

Having diverted themselves to their hearts' content, our young visitants now withdrew, and gave place to successive troops of the other sex, who continued flocking towards the house until near noon; by which time I have no doubt that the greater part of the inhabitants of the valley had bathed themselves in the light of our benignant countenances.

At last, when their numbers began to diminish, a superb-looking warrior stooped the towering plumes of his head-dress beneath the low portal, and entered the house. I saw at once that he was some distinguished personage, the natives regarding him with the utmost deference, and making room for him as he approached. His aspect was imposing. The splendid long drooping tail-feathers of the tropical bird, thickly interspersed with the gaudy plumage of the cock, were disposed in an immense upright semicircle upon his head, their lower extremities being fixed in a crescent of guinea-beads which spanned the forehead. Around his neck were several enormous necklaces of boar's tusks, polished like ivory, and disposed in such a manner as that the longest and largest were upon his capacious chest. Thrust forward through the large apertures in his ears were two small and finely-shaped sperm whale teeth, presenting their cavities in front, stuffed with freshly-plucked leaves, and curiously wrought at the other end into strange little images and devices. These barbaric trinkets, garnished in this manner at their open extremities, and tapering and curving round to a point behind the ear, resembled not a little a pair of cornucopias.

The loins of the warrior were girt about with heavy folds of a dark-colored tappa,[2] hanging before and behind in clusters of braided tassels, while anklets and bracelets of curling human hair completed his unique costume. In his right hand he grasped a beautifully carved paddle-spear, nearly fifteen feet in length, made of the bright koar-wood,[3] one end sharply pointed and the other flattened like an oar-blade. Hanging obliquely from his girdle by a loop of sinnate,[4] was a richly decorated pipe; the slender reed forming its stem was colored with a red pigment, and round it, as well as the idol-bowl, fluttered little streamers of the thinnest tappa.

But that which was most remarkable in the appearance of this splendid islander was the elaborate tattooing displayed on every noble limb. All imaginable lines and curves and figures were delineated over his whole body, and in their grotesque variety and infinite profusion I could only compare them to the crowded groupings of quaint patterns we sometimes see in costly pieces of lacework. The most simple and remarkable of all these ornaments was that which decorated the countenance of the chief. Two broad stripes of tattooing, diverging from the center of his shaven crown, obliquely crossed both eyes—staining the lids—to a little below either ear, where they united with another stripe which swept in a straight line along the lips and formed the base of the triangle. The warrior, from the excellence of his physical proportions, might certainly have been regarded as one of Nature's noblemen, and the lines drawn upon his face may possibly have denoted his exalted rank.

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[2] tapa (cloth made of bark fibers soaked in water and then pounded together)

[3] Perhaps koa, a handsome acacia wood of the Pacific islands.

[4] sennit: flat, loosely-braided cordage

This warlike personage, upon entering the house, seated himself at some distance from the spot where Toby and myself reposed, while the rest of the savages looked alternately from us to him, as if in expectation of something they were disappointed in not perceiving. Regarding the chief attentively, I thought his lineaments appeared familiar to me. As soon as his full face was turned upon me, and I again beheld its extraordinary embellishment, and met the strange gaze to which I had been subjected the preceding night, I immediately, in spite of the alteration in his appearance, recognized the noble Mehevi.[5] On addressing him, he advanced at once in the most cordial manner, and greeting me warmly, seemed to enjoy not a little the effect his barbaric costume had produced upon me.

I forthwith determined to secure, if possible, the good will of this individual, as I easily perceived he was a man of great authority in his tribe, and one who might exert a powerful influence upon our subsequent fate. In the endeavor I was not repulsed; for nothing could surpass the friendliness he manifested towards both my companion and myself. He extended his sturdy limbs by our side, and endeavored to make us comprehend the full extent of the kindly feelings by which he was actuated. The almost insuperable difficulty in communicating to one another our ideas affected the chief with no little mortification. He evinced a great desire to be enlightened with regard to the customs and peculiarities of the far-off country we had left behind us, and to which under the name of Maneeka[6] he frequently alluded.

But that which more than any other subject engaged his attention was the late proceedings of the "Franee," as he called the French, in the neighboring bay of Nukuheva.[7] This seemed a never-ending theme with him, and one concerning which he was never weary of interrogating us. All the information we succeeded in imparting to him on this subject was little more than that we had seen six men-of-war lying in the hostile bay at the time we had left it. When he received this intelligence, Mehevi, by the aid of his fingers, went through a long numerical calculation, as if estimating the number of Frenchmen the squadron might contain.

It was just after employing his faculties in this way that he happened to notice the swelling in my limb. He immediately examined it with the utmost attention, and after doing so, despatched a boy who happened to be standing by, with some message.

After the lapse of a few moments the stripling reëntered the house with an aged islander, who might have been taken for old Hippocrates[8] himself. His head was as bald as the polished surface of a cocoa-nut shell, which article it precisely resembled in smoothness and color, while a long silvery beard swept almost to his girdle of bark. Encircling his temples was a bandeau of the twisted leaves of the omoo tree, pressed closely over the brows to shield his feeble vision from the glare of the sun. His tottering steps were supported by a long slim staff, resembling the wand with which a theatrical magician appears on the stage, and in one hand he carried a freshly plaited fan of the green leaflets of the cocoa-nut tree. A flowing robe of tappa, knotted over the shoulder, hung loosely round his stooping form, and heightened the venerableness of his aspect.

Mehevi, saluting this old gentleman, motioned him to a seat between us, and then uncovering my limb, desired him to examine it. The leech gazed intently from me to Toby, and then proceeded to business. After diligently observing the ailing member, he commenced manipulating it; and on the supposition probably that the complaint had deprived the leg of all sensation, began to pinch and hammer it in such a manner that I absolutely roared with the pain. Thinking that I was as capable of making an application of thumps and pinches to the part as any one else, I endeavored to resist this species of medical treatment. But it was not so easy a matter to get out of the clutches of the old wizard; he fastened on the unfortunate limb as if it were something for which he had been long seeking, and muttering some kind of incantation continued his discipline, pounding it after a fashion that set me well nigh crazy; while Mehevi, upon the same principle which prompts an affectionate mother to hold a struggling child in a dentist's chair, restrained me in his powerful grasp, and actually encouraged the wretch in this infliction of torture.

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[5] A chieftain who had greeted them the evening before.

[6] America

[7] The French had lately taken possession of the Marquesas.

[8] The Greek physician, called the "Father of medicine"; he died about 377 B. C.

Almost frantic with rage and pain, I yelled like a bedlamite; while Toby, throwing himself into all the attitudes of a posture-master, vainly endeavored to expostulate with the natives by signs and gestures. To have looked at my companion, as, sympathizing with my sufferings, he strove to put an end to them, one would have thought that he was the deaf and dumb alphabet incarnated. Whether my tormentor yielded to Toby's entreaties, or paused from sheer exhaustion, I do not know; but all at once he ceased his operations, and at the same time the chief relinquishing his hold upon me, I fell back, faint and breathless with the agony I had endured.

My unfortunate limb was now left much in the same condition of a rump-steak after undergoing the castigating process which precedes cooking. My physician, having recovered from the fatigues of his exertions, as if anxious to make amends for the pain to which he had subjected me, now took some herbs out of a little wallet that was suspended from his waist, and moistening them in water, applied them to the inflamed part, stooping over it at the same time, and either whispering a spell, or having a little confidential chat with some imaginary demon located in the calf of my leg. My limb was now swathed in leafy bandages, and grateful to Providence for the cessation of hostilities, I was suffered to rest.

Mehevi shortly after rose to depart; but before he went he spoke authoritatively to one of the natives whom he addressed as Kory-Kory; and from the little I could understand of what took place, pointed him out to me as a man whose peculiar business thenceforth would be to attend upon my person. I am not certain that I comprehended as much as this at the time, but the subsequent conduct of my trusty body-servant fully assured me that such must have been the case.

I could not but be amused at the manner in which the chief addressed me upon this occasion, talking to me for at least fifteen or twenty minutes as calmly as if I could understand every word that he said. I remarked this peculiarity very often afterwards in many other of the islanders.

Mehevi having now departed, and the family physician having likewise made his exit, we were left about sunset with the ten or twelve natives, who by this time I had ascertained composed the household of which Toby and I were members. As the dwelling to which we had been first introduced was the place of my permanent abode while I remained in the valley, and as I was necessarily placed upon the most intimate footing with its occupants, I may as well here enter into a little description of it and its inhabitants. This description will apply also to nearly all the other dwelling-places in the vale, and will furnish some idea of the generality of the natives.

Near one side of the valley, and about midway up the ascent of a rather abrupt rise of ground waving with the richest verdure, a number of large stones were laid in successive courses, to the height of nearly eight feet, and disposed in such a manner that their level surface corresponded in shape with the habitation which was perched upon it. A narrow space, however, was reserved in front of the dwelling, upon the summit of this pile of stones (called by the natives a "pi-pi"), which being enclosed by a little picket of canes, gave it somewhat the appearance of a veranda. The frame of the house was constructed of large bamboos planted uprightly, and secured together at intervals by transverse stalks of the light wood of the hibiscus, lashed with thongs of bark. The rear of the tenement—built up with successive ranges of cocoa-nut boughs bound one upon another, with their leaflets cunningly woven together—inclined a little from the vertical, and extended from the extreme edge of the "pi-pi" to about twenty feet from its surface; whence the shelving roof—thatched with the long tapering leaves of the palmetto—sloped steeply off to within about five feet of the floor; leaving the eaves drooping with tassel-like appendages over the front of the habitation. This was constructed of light and elegant canes, in a kind of open screen-work, tastefully adorned with bindings of variegated sinnate, which served to hold together its various parts. The sides of the house were similarly built; thus presenting three quarters for the circulation of the air, while the whole was impervious to the rain.

In length this picturesque building was perhaps twelve yards, while in breadth it could not have exceeded as many feet. So much for the exterior; which, with its wire-like reed-twisted sides, not a little reminded me of an immense aviary.

Stooping a little, you passed through a narrow aperture in its front; and facing you, on entering, lay two long, perfectly straight, and well-polished trunks of the cocoa-nut tree, extending the full length of the dwelling; one of them placed closely against the rear, and the other lying parallel with it some two yards distant, the interval between them being spread with a multitude of gaily-worked mats, nearly all of a different pattern. This space formed the common couch and lounging place of the natives, answering the purpose of a divan in Oriental countries. Here would they slumber through the hours of the night, and recline luxuriously during the greater part of the day. The remainder of the floor presented only the cool shining surfaces of the large stones of which the "pi-pi" was composed.

From the ridge-pole of the house hung suspended a number of large packages enveloped in coarse tappa; some of which contained festival dresses, and various other matters of the wardrobe, held in high estimation. These were easily accessible by means of a line, which, passing over the ridge-pole, had one end attached to a bundle, while with the other, which led to the side of the dwelling and was there secured, the package could be lowered or elevated at pleasure.

Against the farther wall of the house were arranged in tasteful figures a variety of spears and javelins, and other implements of savage warfare. Outside of the habitation, and built upon the piazza-like area in its front, was a little shed used as a sort of larder or pantry, and in which were stored various articles of domestic use and convenience. A few yards from the pi-pi was a large shed built of cocoa-nut boughs, where the process of preparing the "poee-poee"[9] was carried on, and all culinary operations attended to.

Thus much for the house, and its appurtenances; and it will be readily acknowledged that a more commodious and appropriate dwelling for the climate and the people could not possibly be devised. It was cool, free to admit the air, scrupulously clean, and elevated above the dampness and impurities of the ground.

But now to sketch the inmates; and here I claim for my tried servitor and faithful valet Kory-Kory the precedence of a first description. As his character will be gradually unfolded in the course of my narrative, I shall for the present content myself with delineating his personal appearance. Kory-Kory, though the most devoted and best natured serving-man in the world, was, alas! a hideous object to look upon. He was some twenty-five years of age, and about six feet in height, robust and well made, and of the most extraordinary aspect. His head was carefully shaven, with the exception of two circular spots, about the size of a dollar, near the top of the cranium, where the hair, permitted to grow of an amazing length, was twisted up in two prominent knots, that gave him the appearance of being decorated with a pair of horns. His beard, plucked out by the root from every other part of his face, was suffered to droop in hairy pendants, two of which garnished his upper lip, and an equal number hung from the extremity of his chin.

Kory-Kory, with a view of improving the handiwork of nature, and perhaps prompted by a desire to add to the engaging expression of his countenance, had seen fit to embellish his face with three broad longitudinal stripes of tattooing, which, like those country roads that go straight forward in defiance of all obstacles, crossed his nasal organ, descended into the hollow of his eyes, and even skirted the borders of his mouth. Each completely spanned his physiognomy; one extending in a line with his eyes, another crossing the face in the vicinity of the nose, and the third sweeping along his lips from ear to ear. His countenance thus triply hooped, as it were, with tattooing, always reminded me of those unhappy wretches whom I have sometimes observed gazing out sentimentally from behind the grated bars of a prison window; whilst the entire body of my savage valet, covered all over with representations of birds and fishes, and a variety of most unaccountable-looking creatures, suggested to me the idea of a pictorial museum of natural history, or an illustrated copy of Goldsmith's *Animated Nature.*[10]

But it seems really heartless in me to write thus of the poor islander, when I owe perhaps to his unremitting attentions the very existence I now enjoy. Kory-Kory, I mean thee no harm in what I say in regard to thy outward adornings; but they were a little curious to my unaccustomed sight, and therefore I dilate upon them. But to underrate or forget thy faithful services is something I could never be guilty of, even in the giddiest moment of my life.

The father of my attached follower was a native of gigantic frame, and had once possessed prodigious physical powers; but the lofty form was now yielding to the inroads of time, though the hand of disease seemed never to have been laid upon the aged warrior. Marheyo—for such was his name—appeared to have retired from all active participation in the affairs of the valley, seldom or never accompanying the natives in their various expeditions; and employing the greater part of his time in throwing up a little shed just outside the house, upon which he was engaged to my certain knowledge for four months, without appearing to make any sensible advance. I suppose the old gentleman was in his dotage, for he manifested in various ways the characteristics which mark this particular stage of life.

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[9] A starchy food prepared from taro root or bread fruit variously compounded. It is fermented and forms a glutinous paste.

[10] A compilation produced by Oliver Goldsmith in 1774.

I remember in particular his having a choice pair of ear-ornaments, fabricated from the teeth of some sea-monster. These he would alternately wear and take off at least fifty times in the course of the day, going and coming from his little hut on each occasion with all the tranquillity imaginable. Sometimes slipping them through the slits in his ears, he would seize his spear—which in length and slightness resembled a fishing-pole—and go stalking beneath the shadows of the neighboring groves, as if about to give a hostile meeting to some cannibal knight. But he would soon return again, and hiding his weapon under the projecting eaves of the house, and rolling his clumsy trinkets carefully in a piece of tappa, would resume his more pacific operations as quietly as if he had never interrupted them.

But despite his eccentricities, Marheyo was a most paternal and warm-hearted old fellow, and in this particular not a little resembled his son Kory-Kory. The mother of the latter was the mistress of the family, and a notable housewife, and a most industrious old lady she was. If she did not understand the art of making jellies, jams, custards, tea-cakes, and such like trashy affairs, she was profoundly skilled in the mysteries of preparing "amar," "poee-poee," and "kokoo,"[11] with other substantial matters. She was a genuine busy-body; bustling about the house like a country landlady at an unexpected arrival; forever giving the young girls tasks to perform, which the little hussies as often neglected; poking into every corner, and rummaging over bundles of old tappa, or making a prodigious clatter among the calabashes. Sometimes she might have been seen squatting upon her haunches in front of a huge wooden basin, and kneading poee-poee with terrific vehemence, dashing the stone pestle about as if she would shiver the vessel into fragments; on other occasions, galloping about the valley in search of a particular kind of leaf, used in some of her recondite operations, and returning home, toiling and sweating, with a bundle, under which most women would have sunk.

To tell the truth, Kory-Kory's mother was the only industrious person in all the valley of Typee; and she could not have employed herself more actively had she been left an exceedingly muscular and destitute widow, with an inordinate supply of young children, in the bleakest part of the civilized world. There was not the slightest necessity for the greater portion of the labor performed by the old lady: but she seemed to work from some irresistible impulse; her limbs continually swaying to and fro, as if there were some indefatigable engine concealed within her body which kept her in perpetual motion.

Never suppose that she was a termagant or a shrew for all this; she had the kindliest heart in the world, and acted towards me in particular in a truly maternal manner, occasionally putting some little morsel of choice food into my hand, some outlandish kind of savage sweetmeat or pastry, like a doting mother petting a sickly urchin with tarts and sugar plums. Warm indeed are my remembrances of the dear, good, affectionate old Tinor!

Besides the individuals I have mentioned, there belonged to the household three young men, dissipated, good-for-nothing, roystering blades of savages, who were either employed in prosecuting love affairs with the maidens of the tribe, or grew boozy on "arva"[12] and tobacco in the company of congenial spirits, the scapegraces of the valley.

Among the permanent inmates of the house were likewise several lovely damsels, who instead of thrumming pianos and reading novels, like more enlightened young ladies, substituted for these employments the manufacture of a fine species of tappa; but for the greater portion of the time were skipping from house to house, gadding and gossiping with their acquaintances.

From the rest of these, however, I must except the beauteous nymph Fayaway, who was my peculiar favorite. Her free, pliant figure was the very perfection of female grace and beauty. Her complexion was a rich and mantling olive, and when watching the glow upon her cheeks I could almost swear that beneath the transparent medium there lurked the blushes of a faint vermilion. The face of this girl was a rounded oval, and each feature as perfectly formed as the heart or imagination of man could desire. Her full lips, when parted with a smile, disclosed teeth of a dazzling whiteness; and when her rosy mouth opened with a burst of merriment, they looked like the milk-white seeds of the "arta," a fruit of the valley, which, when cleft in twain, shows them reposing in rows on either side, imbedded in the red and juicy pulp. Her hair of the deepest brown, parted irregularly in the middle, flowed in natural ringlets over her shoulders, and whenever she chanced to stoop, fell over and hid from view her lovely bosom. Gazing into the depths of her strange blue eyes, when she was in a contemplative mood, they seemed most placid yet unfathomable; but when illuminated by some lively emotion, they beamed upon the beholder like stars. The hands of Fayaway were as soft and delicate as those of any countess; for an entire exemption from rude labor marks the girlhood and even prime of a Typee woman's life. Her feet, though wholly exposed, were as diminutive and fairly shaped as those which peep from beneath the skirts of a Lima lady's dress. The skin of this young creature, from continual ablutions and the use of mollifying ointments, was inconceivably smooth and soft.

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[11] Articles of food.

[12] A fermented drink made from green cocoa-nut juice.

I may succeed, perhaps, in particularizing some of the individual features of Fayaway's beauty, but that general loveliness of appearance which they all contributed to produce I will not attempt to describe. The easy unstudied graces of a child of nature like this, breathing from infancy an atmosphere of perpetual summer, and nurtured by the simple fruits of the earth; enjoying a perfect freedom from care and anxiety, and removed effectually from all injurious tendencies, strike the eye in a manner which cannot be portrayed. This picture is no fancy sketch; it is drawn from the most vivid recollections of the person delineated.

Were I asked if the beauteous form of Fayaway was altogether free from the hideous blemish of tattooing, I should be constrained to answer that it was not. But the practitioners of this barbarous art, so remorseless in their inflictions upon the brawny limbs of the warriors of the tribe, seem to be conscious that it needs not the resources of their profession to augment the charms of the maidens of the vale.

The females are very little embellished in this way, and Fayaway, and all the other young girls of her age, were even less so than those of their sex more advanced in years. The reason of this peculiarity will be alluded to hereafter. All the tattooing that the nymph in question exhibited upon her person may be easily described. Three minute dots, no bigger than pin-heads, decorated either lip, and at a little distance were not at all discernible. Just upon the fall of the shoulder were drawn two parallel lines half an inch apart, and perhaps three inches in length, the interval being filled with delicately executed figures. These narrow bands of tattooing, thus placed, always reminded me of those stripes of gold lace worn by officers in undress, and which are in lieu of epaulettes to denote their rank.

Thus much was Fayaway tattooed. The audacious hand which had gone so far in its desecrating work stopping short, apparently wanting the heart to proceed.

But I have omitted to describe the dress worn by this nymph of the valley.

Fayaway—I must avow the fact—for the most part clung to the primitive and summer garb of Eden. But how becoming the costume! It showed her fine figure to the best possible advantage; and nothing could have been better adapted to her peculiar style of beauty. On ordinary occasions she was habited precisely as I have described the two youthful savages whom we had met on first entering the valley. At other times, when rambling among the groves, or visiting at the houses of her acquaintances, she wore a tunic of white tappa, reaching from her waist to a little below the knees; and when exposed for any length of time to the sun, she invariably protected herself from its rays by a floating mantle of the same material, loosely gathered about the person. Her gala dress will be described hereafter.

As the beauties of our own land delight in bedecking themselves with fanciful articles of jewelry, suspending them from their ears, hanging them about their necks, and clasping them around their wrists; so Fayaway and her companions were in the habit of ornamenting themselves with similar appendages.

Flora was their jeweler. Sometimes they wore necklaces of small carnation flowers, strung like rubies upon a fiber of tappa, or displayed in their ears a single white bud, the stem thrust backward through the aperture, and showing in front the delicate petals folded together in a beautiful sphere, and looking like a drop of the purest pearl. Chaplets too, resembling in their arrangement the strawberry coronal worn by an English peeress, and composed of intertwined leaves and blossoms, often crowned their temples; and bracelets and anklets of the same tasteful pattern were frequently to be seen. Indeed, the maidens of the island were passionately fond of flowers, and never wearied of decorating their persons with them; a lovely trait in their character, and one that ere long will be more fully alluded to.

Though in my eyes, at least, Fayaway was indisputably the loveliest female I saw in Typee, yet the description I have given of her will in some measure apply to nearly all the youthful portion of her sex in the valley. Judge ye then, reader, what beautiful creatures they must have been.

1846

BAYARD TAYLOR

Born, Chester County, Pennsylvania, 1825, died, Berlin, Germany, 1878. Taylor was apprenticed as a printer, began early to contribute to newspapers, went to Europe as a special writer for the New York *Tribune*, traveling afoot all over western Europe, 1844-1846, visited California during the gold excitement, and later nearly all the countries of the civilized world. He had a diplomatic post at Petrograd, 1862-1863, and had but recently been appointed minister to Germany when he died. Aside from many books of travel between 1846 and 1869, notably *Views Afoot,* 1846; *El Dorado,* 1850; and *Greece and Russia,* 1859, Taylor produced *Ximena* (poem), 1844; *Rhymes of Travel,* 1848; *Translation of Faust,* 1870-1871; *Lars: A Pastoral of Norway,* 1873; *Studies in German Literature,* 1879.

From VIEWS A-FOOT

CHAPTER XXX

PASSAGE OF THE ST. GOTHARD

Leaving Amstegg, I passed the whole day among snowy, sky-piercing Alps, torrents, chasms, and clouds! The clouds appeared to be breaking up as we set out, and the white top of the Reussberg was now and then visible in the sky. Just above the village are the remains of Zwing Uri, the castle begun by the tyrant Gessler,[1] for the complete subjugation of the canton. Following the Reuss up through a narrow valley, we passed the Bristenstock, which lifts its jagged crags nine thousand feet in the air, while on the other side stand the snowy summits which lean towards the Rhone Glacier and St. Gothard. From the deep glen where the Reuss foamed down towards the Lake of the Forest Cantons, the mountains rose with a majestic sweep so far into the sky that the brain grew dizzy in following their outlines. Woods, chalets, and slopes of herbage covered their bases, where the mountain cattle and goats were browsing, while the herd-boys sang their native melodies or woke the ringing echoes with the loud, sweet sounds of their wooden horns; higher up, the sides were broken into crags and covered with stunted pines; then succeeded a belt of bare rock with a little snow lying in the crevices, and the summits of dazzling white looked out from the clouds half-way to the zenith. Sometimes when the vale was filled with clouds it was startling to see them parting around a solitary summit, apparently isolated in the air at an immense height, for the mountain to which it belonged was hidden to the very base!

The road passed from one side of the valley to the other, crossing the Reuss on bridges sometimes ninety feet high. After three or four hours' walking, we reached a frightful pass called the Schöllenen. So narrow is the defile that before reaching it, the road seemed to enter directly into the mountain. Precipices a thousand feet high towêr above, and the stream roars and boils in the black depth below. The road is a wonder of art; it winds around the edge of horrible chasms or is carried on lofty arches across, with sometimes a hold apparently so frail that one involuntarily shudders. At a place called the Devil's Bridge, the Reuss leaps about seventy feet in three or four cascades, sending up a continual cloud of spray, while a wind created by the fall, blows and whirls around, with a force that nearly lifts one from his feet.

Beyond the Devil's Bridge, the mountains which nearly touched before, interlock into each other, and a tunnel three hundred and seventy-five feet long leads through the rock into the vale of Urseren, surrounded by the Upper Alps. The little town of Andermatt lies in the middle of this valley, which with the peaks around is covered with short, yellowish-brown grass. We met near Amstegg a little Italian boy walking home from Germany, quite alone and without money, for we saw him give his last kreutzer to a blind beggar along the road. We therefore took him with us, as he was afraid to cross the St. Gothard alone.

After refreshing ourselves at Andermatt, we started, five in number, including a German student, for the St. Gothard. Behind the village of Hospiz, which stands at the bottom of the valley leading to Realp and the Furca pass, the way commences winding backwards and forwards, higher and higher, through a valley covered with rocks, with the mighty summits of the Alps around, untenanted save by the chamois and mountain eagle. Not a tree was to be seen. The sides of the mountains were covered with loose rocks waiting for the next rain to wash them down, and the tops were robed in eternal snow. A thick cloud rolled over us as we went on, following the diminishing brooks to their snowy source in the peak of St. Gothard. We cut off the bends of the road by footpaths up the rocks, which we ascended in single file, little Pietro with his staff and bundle bringing up the rear. The rarefied air we breathed, seven thousand feet above the sea, was like exhilarating gas. We felt no fatigue, but ran and shouted and threw snowballs, in the middle of August!

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[1] The tyrant whom William Tell defied. The story is now thought to be legendary.

After three hours' walk we reached the two clear and silent lakes which send their waters to the Adriatic and the North Sea. Here, as we looked down on the Italian side, the sky became clear; we saw the top of St. Gothard many thousand feet above, and stretching to the south the summits of the mountains which guard the vales of the Ticino and the Adda. The former monastery[2] has been turned into an inn; there is, however, a kind of church attached, attended by a single monk. It was so cold that although late, we determined to descend to the first village. The Italian side is very steep, and the road, called the Via Trimola, is like a thread dropped down and constantly doubling back upon itself. The deep chasms were filled with snow, although exposed to the full force of the sun, and for a long distance there was scarcely a sign of vegetation.

I thought as we went down, that every step was bringing me nearer to a sunnier land—that the glories of Italy, which had so long lain in the airy background of the future, would soon spread themselves before me in their real or imagined beauty. Reaching at dusk the last height above the vale of the Ticino, we saw the little village of Airolo with its musical name, lying in a hollow of the mountains. A few minutes of leaping, sliding, and rolling, took us down the grassy declivity, and we found we had descended from the top in an hour and a half, although the distance by the road is nine miles! I need not say how glad we were to relieve our trembling knees and exhausted limbs.

When, at night, I looked out of my chamber-window, the silver moon of Italy, (for we fancied that her light was softer and that the skies were already bluer) hung trembling above the fields of snow that stretched in their wintry brilliance along the mountains around. I heard the roar of the Ticino and the deepened sound of falling cascades, and thought, if I were to take those waters for my guide, to what glorious places they would lead me!

We left Airolo early the next morning, to continue our journey down the valley of the Ticino. The mists and clouds of Switzerland were exchanged for a sky of the purest blue, and we felt, for the first time in ten days, uncomfortably warm. The mountains which flank the Alps on this side, are still giants—lofty and bare, and covered with snow in many places. The limit of the German dialect is on the summit of St. Gothard, and the peasants saluted us with a *"buon giorno,"*[3] as they passed. This, with the clearness of the skies and the warmth of the air, made us feel that Italy was growing nearer.

On our first day's journey we passed through two terrific mountain gorges, almost equaling in grandeur the defile of the Devil's Bridge. The Ticino, in its course to Lago Maggiore, has to make a descent of nearly three thousand feet, passing through three valleys, which lie like terraces, one below the other. In passing from one to the other, it forces its way in twenty cataracts through a cleft in the mountains. The road, constructed with the utmost labor, threads these dark chasms, sometimes carried in a tunnel through the rock, sometimes passing on arches above the boiling flood. I here noticed a very beautiful effect of the water, perhaps attributable to some mineral substance it contained. The spray and foam thrown up in the dashing of the vexed current, was of a light, delicate pink, although the stream itself was a soft blue; and the contrast of these two colors was very remarkable.

As we kept on, however, there was a very perceptible change in the scenery. The gloomy pines disappeared and the mountains were covered in their stead, with picturesque chestnut trees, with leaves of a shining green. The grass and vegetation were much more luxuriant than on the other side of the Alps, and fields of maize and mulberry orchards covered the valley. We saw the people busy at work reeling silk in the villages. Every mile we advanced made a sensible change in the vegetation. The chestnuts were larger, the maize higher, the few straggling grapevines increased into bowers and vineyards, while the gardens were filled with plum, pear, and fig-trees, and the display of delicious fruit which we saw in the villages, gave us promise of the luxuriance that was to come.

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[2] The hospice there dates from the fourteenth century.

[3] "Good day."

The vineyards are much more beautiful than the German fields of stakes.[4] The vines are not trimmed, but grow from year to year over a frame higher than the head, supported through the whole field on stone pillars. They interlace and form a complete leafy screen, while the clusters hang below. The light came dimly through the green, transparent leaves, and nothing was wanting to make them real bowers of Arcadia. Although we were still in Switzerland, the people began to have that lazy, indolent look which characterizes the Italians; most of the occupations were carried on in the open air, and brown-robed, sandaled friars were going about from house to house, collecting money and provisions for their support.

We passed Faido and Giornico, near which last village are the remains of an old castle, supposed to have been built by the ancient Gauls, and stopped for the night at Cresciano, which being entirely Italian, we had an opportunity to put in practice the few words we had picked up from Pietro. The little fellow had parted from us with regret a few hours before, at Biasco, where he had relations. The rustic landlord at Cresciano was an honest young fellow, who tried to serve us as well as he could, but we made some ludicrous mistakes through our ignorance of the language.

Three hours' walk brought us to Bellinzona, the capital of the canton. Before reaching it, our road joined that of the Splügen which comes down through the valley of Bernardino. From the bridge where the junction takes place we had a triple view, the grandeur of which took me by surprise, even after coming from Switzerland. We stood at the union of three valleys—that leading to St. Gothard, terminated by the glaciers of the Bernese Oberland, that running off obliquely to the Splügen, and finally the broad vale of the Ticino, extending to Lago Maggiore, whose purple mountains closed the vista. Each valley was perhaps two miles broad and from twenty to thirty long, and the mountains that enclosed them from five to seven thousand feet in height, so you may perhaps form some idea what a view down three such avenues in this Alpine temple would be.

We left Bellinzona at noon, and saw, soon after, from an eminence, the blue line of Lago Maggiore stretched across the bottom of the valley. We saw sunset fade away over the lake, but it was clouded, and did not realize my ideal of such a scene in Italy. A band of wild Italians paraded up and down the village, drawing one of their number in a hand-cart. They made a great noise with a drum and trumpet, and were received everywhere with shouts of laughter. A great jug of wine was not wanting, and the whole seemed to me a very characteristic scene.

We were early awakened at Magadino, at the head of Lago Maggiore, and after swallowing a hasty breakfast, went on board the steamboat *San Carlo,* for Sesto Calende. We got under way at six o'clock, and were soon in motion over the crystal mirror. The water is of the loveliest green hue, and so transparent that we seemed to be floating in mid-air. Another heaven arched far below us; other chains of mountains joined their bases to those which surrounded the lake, and the mirrored cascades leaped upward to meet their originals at the surface. It may be because I have seen it more recently, that the water of Lago Maggiore appears to me the most beautiful in the world. I was delighted with the Scotch lakes, and enraptured with the Traunsee and "Zurich's waters," but this last exceeds them both. I am now incapable of any stronger feeling, until I see the Egean from the Grecian Isles.

The morning was cloudy, and the white wreaths hung low on the mountains, whose rocky sides were covered everywhere with the rank and luxuriant growth of this climate. As we advanced further over this glorious mirror, the houses became more Italian-like; the lower stories rested on arched passages, and the windows were open, without glass, while in the gardens stood the solemn, graceful cypress, and vines, heavy with ripening grapes, hung from bough to bough through the mulberry orchards. Half-way down, in a broad bay, which receives the waters of a stream that descends with the Simplon, are the celebrated Borromean Islands. They are four in number, and seem to float like fairy creations on the water, while the lofty hills form a background whose grandeur enhances by contrast their exquisite beauty.

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[4] Stakes for supporting the vines.

On passing by Isola Madre, we could see the roses in its terraced gardens and the broad-leaved aloes clinging to the rocks. Isola Bella, the loveliest of them all, as its name denotes, was farther off; it rose like a pyramid from the water, terrace above terrace to the summit, and its gardens of never fading foliage, with the glorious panorama around, might make it a paradise, if life were to be dreamed away. On the northern side of the bay lies a large town with a lofty Romanesque tower, and noble mountains sweep around as if to shut out the world from such a scene. The lake was perfectly calm, and groves and gardens slept mirrored in the dark green wave, while the Alps rose afar through the dim, cloudy air. Towards the other end the hills sink lower, and slope off into the plains of Lombardy. Near Arona, on the western side, is a large monastery, overlooking the lower part of the lake. Beside it, on a hill, is a colossal statue of San Carlo Borromeo, who gave his name to the lovely islands above.

After a seven hours' passage, we ran into Sesto Calende, at the foot of the lake. Here passengers and baggage were tumbled promiscuously on shore, the latter gathered into the office to be examined, and the former left at liberty to ramble about an hour until their passports could be signed. We employed the time in trying the flavor of the grapes and peaches of Lombardy, and in looking at the groups of travelers who had come down from the Alps with the annual avalanche at this season. The custom house officers were extremely civil and obliging, as they did not think it necessary to examine our knapsacks, and our passports being soon signed, we were at liberty to enter again into the dominions of His Majesty of Austria. Our companion, the German, whose feet could carry him no further, took a seat on the top of a diligence for Milan; we left Sesto Calende on foot, and plunged into the cloud of dust which was whirling towards the capital of Northern Italy.

We spent the night at the little village of Casina, about sixteen miles from Milan, and here made our first experience of the honesty of Italian inns. We had taken the precaution to inquire beforehand the price of a bed; but it seemed unnecessary and unpleasant, as well as evincing a mistrustful spirit, to do the same with every article we asked for, so we decided to leave it to the host's conscience not to overcharge us. Imagine our astonishment, however, when at starting, a bill was presented to us, in which the smallest articles were set down at three or four times their value. We remonstrated, but to little purpose; the fellow knew scarcely any French, and we as little Italian, so rather than lose time and temper, we paid what he demanded and went on, leaving him to laugh at the successful imposition.

About noon, the road turned into a broad and beautiful avenue of poplars, down which we saw, at a distance, the triumphal arch terminating the Simplon road, which we had followed from Sesto Calende. Beyond it rose the slight and airy pinnacle of the Duomo.[5] We passed by the exquisite structure, gave up our passports at the gates, traversed the broad Piazzi d'Armi, and found ourselves at liberty to choose one of the dozen streets that led into the heart of the city.

184

BEDOUIN SONG

From the Desert I come to thee
  On a stallion shod with fire;
And the winds are left behind
  In the speed of my desire.
Under thy window I stand,
  And the midnight hears my cry:
I love thee, I love but thee,
  With a love that shall not die
    Till the sun grows cold,
    And the stars are old,
    And the leaves of the Judgment
      Book unfold!

Look from thy window and see
  My passion and my pain;
I lie on the sands below,
  And I faint in thy disdain.
Let the night-winds touch thy brow
  With the heat of my burning sigh,
And melt thee to hear the vow
  Of a love that shall not die
    Till the sun grows cold,
    And the stars are old,
    And the leaves of the Judgment
      Book unfold!

My steps are nightly driven,
  By the fever in my breast,
To hear from thy lattice breathed
  The word that shall give me rest.
Open the door of thy heart,
  And open thy chamber door,
And my kisses shall teach thy lips
  The love that shall fade no more
    Till the sun grows cold,

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[5] The Gothic cathedral of Milan.

And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment
Book unfold!

1853 1855

TO THE NILE

Mysterious flood,—that through the silent sands
Hast wandered, century on century,
Watering the length of great Egyptian lands,
Which were not, but for thee,—

Art thou the keeper of that eldest lore,
Written ere yet thy hieroglyphs began,
When dawned upon thy fresh, untrampled shore
The earliest life of man?

Thou guardest temple and vast pyramid,
Where the gray past records its ancient speech;
But in thine unrevealing breast lies hid
What they refuse to teach.

All other streams with human joys and fears
Run blended, o'er the plains of history:
Thou tak'st no note of man; a thousand years
Are as a day to thee.

What were to thee the Osirian[1] festivals?
Or Memnon's[2] music on the Theban plain?
The carnage, when Cambyses[3] made thy halls
Ruddy with royal slain?

Even then thou wast a God, and shrines were built
For worship of thine own majestic flood;
For thee the incense burned,—for thee was spilt
The sacrificial blood.

And past the bannered pylons[4] that arose
Above thy palms, the pageantry and state,
Thy current flowed, calmly as now it flows,
Unchangeable as fate.

Thou givest blessing as a God might give,
Whose being is his bounty: from the slime
Shaken from off thy skirts the nations live,
Through all the years of time.

In thy solemnity, thine awful calm,
Thy grand indifference of destiny,
My soul forgets its pain, and drinks the balm
Which thou dost proffer me.

Thy godship is unquestioned still: I bring
No doubtful worship to thy shrine supreme;
But thus my homage as a chaplet fling,
To float upon thy stream!

1855

THE QUAKER WIDOW

Thee finds me in the garden, Hannah,—come in! 'Tis kind of thee
To wait until the Friends were gone, who came to comfort me.
The still and quiet company a peace may give, indeed,
But blessed is the single heart that comes to us at need.

Come, sit thee down! Here is the bench where Benjamin would sit
On First-day[1] afternoons in spring, and watch the swallows flit:
He loved to smell the sprouting box, and hear the pleasant bees
Go humming round the lilacs and through the apple-trees.

I think he loved the spring: not that he cared for flowers: most men
Think such things foolishness,—but we were first acquainted then,
One spring: the next he spoke his mind; the third I was his wife,
And in the spring (it happened so) our children entered life.

He was but seventy-five: I did not think to lay him yet
In Kennett graveyard, where at Monthly Meeting first we met.
The Father's mercy shows in this: 'tis better I should be
Picked out to bear the heavy cross—alone in age—than he.

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[1] Osiris was an Egyptian deity.

[2] Memnon was a Greek solar hero, son of the dawn. The Greeks gave his name to a colossal statue near Thebes that was said to give forth a musical note when struck by the rays of the rising sun.

[3] Cambyses III., King of Persia, conquered Egypt 525 B. C. and is said to have caused the murder of the king Psammetichus III.

[4] massive gateways

[1] Sunday, in Quaker terminology.

We've lived together fifty years: it seems but one long day,
One quiet Sabbath of the heart, till he was called away;
And as we bring from Meeting-time a sweet contentment home,
So, Hannah, I have store of peace for all the days to come.

I mind (for I can tell thee now) how hard it was to know
If I had heard the spirit right, that told me I should go;
For father had a deep concern upon his mind that day,
But mother spoke for Benjamin,—she knew what best to say.

Then she was still: they sat awhile: at last she spoke again,
"The Lord incline thee to the right!" and "Thou shalt have him, Jane!"
My father said. I cried. Indeed, 'twas not the least of shocks,
For Benjamin was Hicksite,[2] and father Orthodox.

I thought of this ten years ago, when daughter Ruth we lost:
Her husband's of the world, and yet I could not see her crossed.
She wears, thee knows, the gayest gowns, she hears a hireling priest—[3]
Ah, dear! the cross was ours: her life's a happy one, at least.

Perhaps she'll wear a plainer dress when she's as old as I,—
Would thee believe it, Hannah? once *I* felt temptation nigh!
My wedding-gown was ashen silk, too simple for my taste:
I wanted lace around the neck, and a ribbon at the waist.

How strange it seemed to sit with him upon the women's side!
I did not dare to lift my eyes: I felt more fear than pride,
Till, "in the presence of the Lord," he said, and then there came
A holy strength upon my heart, and I could say the same.

I used to blush when he came near, but then I showed no sign;
With all the meeting looking on, I held his hand in mine.
It seemed my bashfulness was gone, now I was his for life:
Thee knows the feeling, Hannah,—thee, too, hast been a wife.

As home we rode, I saw no fields look half so green as ours;
The woods were coming into leaf, the meadows full of flowers;
The neighbors met us in the lane, and every face was kind,—
'Tis strange how lively everything comes back upon my mind.

I see, as plain as thee sits there, the wedding-dinner spread:
At our own table we were guests, with father at the head;
And Dinah Passmore helped us both,—'twas she stood up with me,
And Abner Jones with Benjamin,—and now they're gone, all three!

It is not right to wish for death; the Lord disposes best.
His Spirit comes to quiet hearts, and fits them for his rest;
And that he halved our little flock was merciful, I see:
For Benjamin has two in heaven, and two are left with me.

Eusebius never cared to farm,—'twas not his call, in truth,
And I must rent the dear old place, and go to daughter Ruth.
Thee'll say her ways are not like mine,—young people now-a-days
Have fallen sadly off, I think, from all the good old ways.

But Ruth is still a Friend at heart; she keeps the simple tongue,
The cheerful, kindly nature we loved when she was young;
And it was brought upon my mind, remembering her, of late,
That we on dress and outward things perhaps lay too much weight.

I once heard Jesse Kersey say, a spirit clothed with grace,
And pure, almost, as angels are, may have a homely face.

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[2] A sect of Friends which broke away from the orthodox Quakers in the United States in 1827.

[3] A paid minister. The Quakers had none.

And dress may be of less account: the Lord will look within:
The soul it is that testifies of righteousness or sin.

Thee mustn't be too hard on Ruth: she's anxious I should go,
And she will do her duty as a daughter should, I know.
'Tis hard to change so late in life, but we must be resigned:
The Lord looks down contentedly upon a willing mind.

1863

ARIEL IN THE CLOVEN PINE[1]

Now the frosty stars are gone:
I have watched them one by one,
Fading on the shores of Dawn.
Round and full the glorious sun
Walks with level step the spray,
Through his vestibule of Day,
While the wolves that late did howl
Slink to dens and coverts foul,
Guarded by the demon owl,
Who, last night, with mocking croon,
Wheeled athwart the chilly moon,
And with eyes that blankly glared
On my direful torment stared.

The lark is flickering in the light;
Still the nightingale doth sing;—
All the isle, alive with spring,
Lies, a jewel of delight,
On the blue sea's heaving breast:
Not a breath from out the west,
But some balmy smell doth bring
From the sprouting myrtle buds,
Or from meadowy vales that lie
Like a green inverted sky,
Which the yellow cowslip stars,
And the bloomy almond woods,
Cloud-like, cross with roseate bars.
All is life that I can spy,
To the farthest sea and sky,
And my own the only pain
Within this ring of Tyrrhene[2] main.
In the gnarled and cloven Pine
Where that hell-born hag did chain me,
All this orb of cloudless shine,
All this youth in Nature's veins
Tingling with the season's wine,
With a sharper torment pain me.
Pansies in soft April rains
Fill their stalks with honeyed sap
Drawn from Earth's prolific lap;
But the sluggish blood she brings
To the tough Pine's hundred rings,
Closer locks their cruel hold,
Closer draws the scaly bark
Round the crevice, damp and cold,
Where my useless wings I fold,—
Sealing me in iron dark.
By this coarse and alien state
Is my dainty essence wronged;
Finer senses that belonged
To my freedom, chafe at Fate,
Till the happier elves I hate,
Who in moonlight dances turn
Underneath the palmy fern,
Or in light and twinkling bands
Follow on with linked hands
To the Ocean's yellow sands.

Primrose-eyes each morning ope
In their cool, deep beds of grass;
Violets make the airs that pass
Telltales of their fragrant slope.
I can see them where they spring
Never brushed by fairy wing.
All those corners I can spy
In the island's solitude,
Where the dew is never dry,
Nor the miser bees intrude.
Cups of rarest hue are there,
Full of perfumed wine undrained,—
Mushroom banquets, ne'er profaned,
Canopied by maiden-hair.
Pearls I see upon the sands,
Never touched by other hands,
And the rainbow bubbles shine
On the ridged and frothy brine,
Tenantless of voyager
Till they burst in vacant air.
O, the songs that sung might be,
And the mazy dances woven,
Had that witch ne'er crossed the sea
And the Pine been never cloven!

Many years my direst pain
Has made the wave-rocked isle complain
Winds, that from the Cyclades[3]
Came, to blow in wanton riot
Round its shore's enchanted quiet,
Bore my wailings on the seas:

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[1] Ariel, the spirit of the air in Shakspere's *Tempest*, had been imprisoned in a pine by the witch Sycorax.

"Thou . . . wast then her servant;
And, for thou wast a spirit too delicate
To act her earthy and abhorr'd commands,
Refusing her grand hests, she did confine thee,
By help of her more potent ministers
And in her most unmitigable rage,
Into a cloven pine; within which rift
Imprison'd thou didst painfully remain
A dozen years;"

The Tempest, I. ii. 270.

[2] That part of the Mediterranean west of Italy.

[3] Islands in the Ægean Sea.

Sorrowing birds in autumn went
Through the world with my lament.
Still the bitter fate is mine,
All delight unshared to see,
Smarting in the cloven Pine,
While I wait the tardy axe
Which, perchance, shall set me free
From the damned Witch Sycorax.

THE SONG OF THE CAMP

"Give us a song!" the soldiers cried,
The outer trenches guarding,
When the heated guns of the camps allied[1]
Grew weary of bombarding.

The dark Redan,[2] in silent scoff,
Lay, grim and threatening, under;
And the tawny mound of the Malakoff
No longer belched its thunder.

There was a pause. A guardsman said,
"We storm the forts tomorrow;
Sing while we may, another day
Will bring enough of sorrow."

They lay along the battery's side,
Below the smoking cannon:
Brave hearts, from Severn and from Clyde,
And from the banks of Shannon.

They sang of love, and not of fame;
Forgot was Britain's glory:
Each heart recalled a different name,
But all sang "Annie Lawrie."

Voice after voice caught up the song,
Until its tender passion
Rose like an anthem, rich and strong,—
Their battle-eve confession.

Dear girl, her name he dared not speak,
But, as the song grew louder,
Something upon the soldier's cheek
Washed off the stains of powder.

Beyond the darkening ocean burned
The bloody sunset's embers,
While the Crimean valleys learned
How English love remembers.

And once again a fire of hell
Rained on the Russian quarters,
With scream of shot, and burst of shell,
And bellowing of the mortars!

And Irish Nora's eyes are dim
For a singer, dumb and gory;
And English Mary mourns for him
Who sang of "Annie Lawrie."

Sleep, soldiers! still in honored rest
Your truth and valor wearing:
The bravest are the tenderest,—
The loving are the daring.

THE BATH

Off, fetters of the falser life,—
Weeds, that conceal the statue's form!
This silent world with truth is rife,
This wooing air is warm.

Now fall the thin disguises, planned
For men too weak to walk unblamed:
Naked beside the sea I stand,—
Naked and not ashamed.

Where yonder dancing billows dip,
Far-off, to ocean's misty verge,
Plows Morning, like a full-sailed ship,
The Orient's cloudy surge.

With spray of scarlet fire before
The ruffled gold that round her dies,
She sails above the sleeping shore,
Across the waking skies.

The dewy beach beneath her glows;
A penciled beam, the lighthouse burns:
Full-breathed, the fragrant sea-wind blows,—
Life to the world returns!

I stand, a spirit newly-born,
White-limbed and pure, and strong, and fair;
The first-begotten son of Morn,
The nursling of the air!

There, in a heap, the masks of Earth,
The cares, the sins, the griefs, are thrown:
Complete, as through diviner birth,
I walk the sands alone.

With downy hands the winds caress,
With frothy lips the amorous sea,
As welcoming the nakedness
Of vanished gods, in me.

Along the ridged and sloping sand,
Where headlands clasp the crescent cove,
A shining spirit of the land,
A snowy shape, I move:

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[1] In the Crimean war, 1853-1856, to which the poem refers, France and England were allied with Turkey and Sardinia against Russia.

[2] The Redan and the Malakoff were fortifications of Sebastopol finally captured by the allies.

Or, plunged in hollow-rolling brine,
In emerald cradles rocked and swung,
The scepter of the sea is mine,
And mine his endless song.

For Earth with primal dew is wet,
Her long-lost child to rebaptize;
Her fresh, immortal Edens yet
Their Adam recognize.

Her ancient freedom is his fee;
Her ancient beauty is his dower:
She bares her ample breasts, that he
May suck the milk of power.

Press on, ye hounds of life, that lurk
So close, to seize your harried prey;
Ye fiends of Custom, Gold, and Work,—
I hear your distant bay!

And, like the Arab, when he bears
To the insulted camel's path
His garment, which the camel tears,
And straight forgets his wrath;

So, yonder badges of your sway,
Life's paltry husks, to you I give:
Fall on, and in your blindness say:
We hold the fugitive!

But leave to me this brief escape
To simple manhood, pure and free,—
A child of God, in God's own shape,
Between the land and sea!

THOMAS BUCHANAN READ

Born, Chester County, Pennsylvania, 1822, died, New York City, 1872. After working at various handicrafts, Read studied art, settling for a while at Rome, and making portrait painting a specialty. He published poems at various dates from 1847 to 1867, including *The House by the Sea*, 1855; *The Wagoner of the Alleghanies*, 1862.

SHERIDAN'S RIDE

Up from the south, at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester[1] fresh dismay,
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste, to the chieftain's door,
The terrible grumble and rumble and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war
Thundered along the horizon's bar,
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea, uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good broad highway leading down;
And there, through the flush of the morning light,
A steed as black as the steeds of night
Was seen to pass as with eagle flight,
As if he knew the terrible need:
He stretched away with his utmost speed;
Hills rose and fell, but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprung from those swift hoofs, thundering south,
The dust, like smoke from the cannon's mouth
Or the trail of a comet, sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster;
The heart of the steed and the heart of the master
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battlefield calls:
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurning feet the road
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed;
And the landscape sped away behind
Like an ocean flying before the wind;
And the steed, like a bark fed with furnace ire,
Swept on with his wild eye full of fire.
But lo, he is nearing his heart's desire;
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

The first that the general saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops,
What was done? what to do? a glance told him both;
Then striking his spurs, with a terrible oath,
He dashed down the line 'mid a storm of huzzas,

---

[1] Although the poem is not historically accurate, it is true that Sheridan's presence saved the day at the battle of Winchester (or Opequan), September 19-20, 1864. See Sheridan's *Memoirs,* Vol. II, Ch. 3.

And the wave of retreat checked its course
there, because
The sight of the master compelled it to
pause.
With foam and with dust the black charger
was gray;
By the flash of his eye and the red nostril's
play
He seemed to the whole great army to say,
"I have brought you Sheridan, all the way
From Winchester, down to save the day!"

Hurrah, hurrah, for Sheridan!
Hurrah, hurrah, for horse and man!
And when their statues are placed on high,
Under the dome of the Union sky
(The American soldiers' Temple of Fame),
There with the glorious general's name,
Be it said, in letters both bold and bright,
"Here is the steed that saved the day
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
From Winchester, twenty miles away!"

1865

GEORGE HENRY BOKER

Born, Philadelphia, 1823, died there 1890. He was graduated from Princeton College in 1842 and then studied law, but did not practice. From 1871 to 1875 he was minister to Turkey, and from 1875 to 1879 minister to Russia. From 1848 to 1886 he was engaged in literary work, producing many poems and plays.

DIRGE FOR A SOLDIER[1]

Close his eyes; his work is done!
What to him is friend or foeman,
Rise of moon, or set of sun,
Hand of man, or kiss of woman?
Lay him low, lay him low,
In the clover or the snow!
What cares he? he cannot know:
Lay him low!

As man may, he fought his fight,
Proved his truth by his endeavor;
Let him sleep in solemn night,
Sleep forever and forever.
Lay him low, lay him low,
In the clover or the snow!
What cares he? he cannot know:
Lay him low!

Fold him in his country's stars,
Roll the drum and fire the volley!
What to him are all our wars?
What but death bemocking folly?
Lay him low, lay him low,
In the clover or the snow!
What cares he? he cannot know:
Lay him low!

Leave him to God's watching eye;
Trust him to the hand that made him.
Mortal love weeps idly by;
God alone has power to aid him.
Lay him low, lay him low,
In the clover or the snow!
What cares he? he cannot know:
Lay him low!

1862

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD

Born, Hingham, Massachusetts, 1825, died New York, 1903. His father was a sea captai lost at sea. He went as a boy to New York was in the public schools, worked in a foundry and was largely self-educated. He made the acquaintance of Taylor, Read, Hawthorne, an other literary men of influence, and wrote fo magazines and newspapers. Volumes of hi verse appeared at intervals from 1849 to 1892

SILENT SONGS

If I could ever sing the songs
Within me day and night,
The only fit accompaniment
Would be a lute of light!

A thousand dreamy melodies,
Begot with pleasant pain,
Like incantations float around
The chambers of my brain!

But when I strive to utter one,
It mocks my feeble art,
And leaves me silent, with the thorns
Of Music in my heart!

185

THE SEA

[STORM]

Through the night, through the night,
In the saddest unrest,
Wrapt in white, all in white,
With her babe on her breast,
Walks the mother so pale,
Staring out on the gale,
Through the night!

Through the night, through the night,
Where the sea lifts the wreck,
Land in sight, close in sight,
On the surf-flooded deck,

---

[1] General Philip Kearney, killed at Chantilly, Va., September 1, 1862.

Stands the father so brave,
Driving on to his grave,
Through the night!

1852

OUT TO SEA

The wind is blowing east,
And the waves are running free;
Let's hoist the sail at once,
And stand out to sea,
(You and me.)
I am growing more and more
A-weary of the shore;
It was never so before—
Out to sea!

The wind is blowing east,
How it swells the straining sail!
A little further out
We shall have a jolly gale.
(Cling to me.)
The waves are running high,
And the gulls, how they fly!
We shall only see the sky
Out to sea.

The wind is blowing east
From the dark and bloody shore,
Where flash a million swords,
And the dreadful cannon roar.
(Woe is me.)
There's a curse upon the land,
(Is that blood upon my hand?)
What *can* we do but stand
Out to sea?

1854

THE FISHER AND CHARON[1]

Where wild Laconia[2] juts into the sea
The fisher Diotimus had his home.
Between the waters and the woods it stood,
A wattled hut, whose floor was strewn with leaves
And crisp dry sea-weeds: when the tide came in
The surf ran up the beach even to the door.
Here lived the fisher and his aged wife,
Doro, his second self; she on the land,
And he upon the sea, their long lives passed.
He rose at early dawn and dragged his boat
Down to the water's edge, threw in his oars,
His lines, and bait, and then with lusty strokes
Pulled out into the gulf through clouds of mist.
The cold dark waves set shoreward, edged with foam,
The cold rocks rose, and dipt, and passed from sight,
At last day came. All day he rowed and fished,
Now at his lines, now sweating at the oar:
Meantime his old wife Doro sat at home,
Mending his nets or spinning in the sun.
From shore to shore he knew the gulf, the rocks,
The curling eddies and the isles of weed;
He knew the haunts and habits of the fish,
How best to catch them, and the bait they loved;
The sea-birds, too, his fellow fishers, they,
He knew them all. From Tenarus[3] to Crete,
And where the beaches of Egilia[4] break
The shining surge which dies among their shells,
He tracked the scaly tenants of the deep.
The summer smote him with its fiercest fires,
Burned his old face, and browned his sinewy arms;
The winter nipt him with its still, cold wind,
And drenched his cloak of mats with colder rain;
For days he saw no sun, so thick the clouds:
But cloud or sun he put to sea at dawn
Fearless, and with the dusk of eve returned;
The sunset was a torch to light him home;
His boat was guided by its golden flare
Straight to the shore; he saw his hut afar,
And Doro on the sands: she beckoned him:
His sharp keel cut the waves, and ere its wake
Sank in the blackness, grated on the sand.
They lived the common life of little things
Summed up in poverty: like waves the days,
The years went by, each day and year alike,
The last alone remembered. They were young;
Then crooked wrinkles crept about their eyes:

---

[1] The boatman who ferries the spirits of the dead across the river Styx, the river of death.
[2] One of the southern peninsulas of Greece.
[3] Tænarum was a promontory of ancient Laconia.
[4] An island between the islands of Cythera and Crete.

Then they were old. They lived, and loved, and died.
One autumn day, when tropic birds flew home,
The fisher sat beside his dying wife.
She lay upon a couch of withered leaves
That rustled as she moved; above her hung
A coil of line, with sea-weed on its hooks;
A wicker basket was the fisher's seat:
Their dim eyes met, and both with tears were wet.
"Hereafter, Doro, I shall weep alone,"
Said Diotimus. "Not alone," she moaned,
"For I shall walk the solemn shore of death
In tears till you shall come." She clutched his knee,
Twisted her trembling fingers in his hand,
Looked in his face, and waited for the end.
The waters lapped the door stone, and went back;
The tide was slowly setting out to sea,
Leaving a narrow strip of barren sand.
When all was over Diotimus rose
And called the fishers' wives to wash the dead;
But first he placed the needful obolus,[5]
The ferriage of the dead, beneath her tongue;
Her spirit else had wandered by the Styx
An hundred years among the wretched ghosts.
They buried her behind the fisher's hut,
Hard by the wood, among its fallen leaves;
The dead leaves rustled in the restless wind,
And mingled in the fisher's broken dream:
It seemed to him the leaves whereon he lay
Were stirred that night. The dead was by his side!
He rose at dawn, and rowed to sea again,
Scarce knowing what he did; a league from shore
He saw his net was lost, or left behind:
He dropped his oar, and let the crazy boat
Drift as it would, his idle thoughts the while
Drifting about the ocean of the Past.
That day he caught no fish. He found the net,
When the wan sunset led him to his hut;
'Twas on his bed, the pillow of the dead,
He used that net no more. Sometimes for days
He stayed within the hut, to twist his lines,
To mend his wicker baskets, or his cloak;
And then whole days and nights he stayed at sea:
He saw the sun go down into the sea,
Plunging in flame behind the western waves;
He saw him rise, his bath of darkness past,
And scale the purple east: wrapt in his cloak,
The bottom of the boat his only bed,
He lay and watched the stars: he saw the Bear
Steal from his hiding-place, and all night long
Prowl round the northern pole; the Hyades
Sprinkle the threatening forehead of the Bull;
The Fish swim through the portals of the south,
Chasing the Swan; and in the glimmering east
The Charioteer, the Goat that suckled Jove
Perched on his shoulder, looking over Crete.
The sea-birds knew him, and no longer shy,
Swooped down, and snatched the fish around his boat;
Yea, lighted on his boat, his very oars,
And screamed, and chattered of their briny loves:
He harmed them not, his thoughts were in the Past.
"Could Time restore those days, or give her back,"
The fisher thought, "then I could die in peace;
But Time will not restore them, nor will she
Return to me: the dead return no more."
"But there's a way to her," the old man thought,
And stared in the dark water. "Day and night
The gate stands wide; a sudden flaw of wind
Might send me through it, nay, a fish's fin
Rubbing against the bottom of the boat.
There are a thousand doors that lead to death.
I trail my fingers in the rippling brine
And dip my death; a cup of this salt wine
Drained in the sunless sea would end my days.
But would it help me to my wife again,
My dear, dear Doro? Does she wait for me,
There where my soul would land? I know not that."

---

[5] A small Greek coin worth less than three cents.

He stared in the black water more and more;
He saw the tangled weeds, the glancing fish,
But Doro never; only in his dreams
Did he behold her, and she seemed to weep,
Walking alone the solemn shores of Death!
But now the tropic birds were all flown home,
The autumn leaves were shed, and wintry rains
Were sown in swelling seas; cold blew the winds.
It was too cold to live upon the sea;
The sea was full of ice,[6] and every spray
That lifted his frail boat froze on the prow:
Besides his boat grew frailer day by day;
Old like himself; it scarcely rode the waves:
A storm would swamp it. "I should find my death
In the cold waters," Diotimus said,
"But not my dear dead wife; for though I died
I could not join the souls across the Styx,
So poor am I: I have no obolus
To fee old Charon." So he sought the shore.
He hung his nets and lines within the hut,
Stiffened with frost, made up his bed of leaves,
And gathered fagots in the windy wood
To feed his fire: he walked the bleak bare wood,
Lone as the wind that snapped the withered limbs;
Also the barren beach, the stretch of sand,
Close to the tumbling wall of roaring surf.
The surf, and sand, and melancholy wood
Troubled him less, so waste and grim were they,
Than did the hut; the memory of the dead
Peopled the lonely hut, and filled his thoughts.
He seemed to see, or saw, his vanished wife
About her household duties all the day;
She mended nets, she spun, she built his fires:
At night he dreamed of her; when the wind blew
'Twas she who shook his door; when fell the rain,
Trickling upon him through the crumbling roof,
'Twas she who wept, the tears he felt were hers:
She was the ghost of moonlight on the wall!
"I can no longer bear this loss of mine,
Here where it came upon me: I must go,
Whither I know not, but to sea, to sea;
There is no rest, no peace for me on land.
The winter winds may freeze me, or the isles
Of ice may crush my boat; I can but die:
But die I shall not yet, for I must seek
Charon, and ask him to forego his fee;
Not else can rest be mine when I am dead."
So spake the fisher one gray winter's day,
And straightway put to sea: the isles of ice
Parted before his prow, and closed astern;
Behind the noisy shocks of spray, his hut
Grew less and less: it disappeared: the beach
Sank in the sea: the woods alone were left,
The long, dark belt of woods and ragged hills.
At noon he doubled Tenarus, and beat
Northward along Laconia's western shore;
Somewhere along the shore, Tradition said,
Within a gorge, the gates of Hades[7] rose;
Where, no man knew: such knowledge suits not life.
Death brooded round that awful shore and sea;
The dreary woods were dead; nor leaf, nor limb
Stirred in the strong north wind that filled the sky:
Beeches were none, but rocks, a wall of rock,
With gaping caverns where the sea was lost:
No surf, no crested wave, no rippled swell
Wrinkled the sea's broad plain, and yet it moved,
Swept shoreward like a wind. There was a gulf
Between two barren mountains, whose black jaws
Devoured the light; to this the current set,
Bearing the fisher's boat; for though his oars
Lay on the thwarts, and all his sails were furled,
He drove before the wind to the inner land.
Soon as he passed that portal of the sea

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[6] Stoddard has not taken pains to separate the real from the imaginative. He might conceivably have put the old fisherman afloat on Homer's stream of ocean and brought him to Styx, but he should not have placed ice in the Mediterranean.

[7] The region of the dead.

There came a change; the thought that led him on
Slackened; his mind grew weak; a drowsy weight
Hung on his lids: it was as he had crossed
The leaden portals of the Land of Sleep.
All memory of his former life was lost,
Sunk in his dream: only a sense of loss
Lived in his soul, a vague and muffled grief.
He bathed his eyes in that mysterious stream
To break his slumber; down his wrinkled cheek
The water trickled, and he tasted it:
'Twas sweet, and bitter, like forgetfulness,
A bitter sweet: he knew the river then—
Lethe,[8] whose dreadful waters lead to death!
At last the current emptied in the Styx,
A sluggish lake, whose nearer bank alone
Was seen; in mist the farther bank was hid:
He took his oars, and rowed to Charon's wharf.
A line of sickly willows fringed the shore,
Their ragged tresses draggling in the scum
That mantled the grim pool: a ghostly rank
Of poplars, like a halted train of shades,
Trembled; on one a raven sat, and slept.
And here and there were single ghostly shapes,
That wandered up and down like morning mists;
Others from somewhere inland through a gorge
Drifted and drifted, down to Charon's wharf.
Charon himself was in his dusky barge,
Just touching land, returned from Hades: still
The furrow of his wake was on the scum.
His beard was long and ragged, and his hair
Hung o'er his brows; the wrinkles of his face
Seemed carved in bronze or stone: a stony light
Glinted in his hard eyes, whose steady frown
Looked pity dead: no pity Charon knew.
"What man art thou? and wherefore art thou come?"
"My name is Diotimus, and my home
Is in Laconia; Doro was my wife.
She died: you ferried her across the Styx."
"Perchance, old man: but now so many cross
I cannot long remember single souls,
Or queens, or fisher's wives: but get thee back:
The dead and not the living come to me."
So Charon said, and waved the fisher back.
"Not back to earth again, oh, say not that!
He who has lived for threescore years and ten,
So old am I, and lived the poor man's life,
Once freed therefrom, not willingly returns.
From youth to age upon the dangerous sea
My days were passed; by suns of summer scorched,
By winds of winter numbed; and tempests rose,
Great whirlwinds in the sky, and in the sea
Chasms and gulfs of night; but all I bore,
For Doro lived; but now that she is dead
I long to die: there is no joy in life:
Pity me, then, and let me cross the Styx."
"*He will not pity thee,*" a shadowy voice
Breathed from the shore; "*but rather mock thy grief:*
There is no mercy shown to men in life,
Why should they look for any after death?"
Beneath the poplar where the raven sat
This hopeless voice to Diotimus croaked:
The raven heard, and answered in his dream.
Meantime the wandering shapes had gathered round
To watch the issue; thin at first as smoke,
Against the swaying willow branches drawn,
Their dim uncertain outlines surer grew,
Grew firm and certain: wrapt in long white robes,
That swept the ground, and o'er their faces fell
Hood-like, they stood: the wretched dead were they,
That wander by the Styx an hundred years.
"I bear the dead alone across the Styx,"
Charon replied, and smiled a grim dark smile;
"Only the dead, nor all the dead, you see.
Prayers have been said to me, tears have been shed
For ages, as ye reckon time on earth;
In vain: I heed not human tears or prayers!
Great kings have laid their scepter at my feet,
Pale queens have knelt to me, and wrung their hands,
To die before their time: I sent them back!
What man art thou, that I should let thee cross?

---

[8] The river of forgetfulness, in Hades.

Go back, and live the remnant of thy life:
Live till the lords of life shall let thee die—
It cannot now be long—then come to me;
Not as thou comest now, but with the dead:
Come with an obolus, and thou shalt cross.”
“I have no obolus, but I shall cross,”
The fisher said, “for Doro waits for me.”
Above the dead the silent willows leaned;
The air was hushed; except the poplar rods,
High over all, naught stirred: the poplars shook,
Reached by the couriers of a coming wind,
Or some impending doom! A wind of doom
Swept through the gorge behind them, driving on
A sea of spirits and the noise of war:
In war two mighty kingdoms then were met;
These were the flower of both, slain in the shock.
Rushing from life to death they threw themselves
Straight into Charon’s barge, or would have thrown,
But that his oar, uplifted, kept them off.
And now while clamor and confusion reigned,
Unseen, the wary fisher seized his oars
And pulled for the farther shore: before his prow
The scum was thick, and thick the matted weeds
Below the sliding keel: a faint dead scent
Burthened the waste; nor wave nor ripple there,
He tore his way through slime at every stroke.
Of all the slaughtered dead that stormed his barge
Not one would Charon ferry o’er the Styx,
For all were yet unburied in the field;
He stretched his hand in vain; no burial fee
Dropped in his greedy palm; he drove them back.
A single ghost, a slave that died in peace,
Wealthier with one poor obolus than they,
Heroes, and valiant captains, kings of war,
Stepped in the barge, and sat at Charon’s feet.
The barge was turned, and now began the chase;
For Charon now the fisher missed, and saw
His laboring boat half-way across the stream:
He bent him to his oars, that rose and fell
Faster and faster, raining strokes that shook
The sea of scum, and dashed its turbid waves,
Shouting great shouts to fright the daring man:
The shouts o’ertook the fisher in his flight,
And fright a little moment chilled his heart,
But soon was strangled by the iron will
That nerved his arm, half hope and half despair:
The crazy boat was strained in every seam,
And slow, great drops oozed through her trembling sides;
But not the less she flew, pursued by shouts,
And frowning Charon in his gloomy barge.
But now the mist that veiled the further bank
Grew thin, and thinner, and the fisher caught
The shore beyond, a green, low-lying shore,
Deep meadows, uplands, slopes, and happy woods
Steeped through and through with light; and stately Shapes
That came and went like gods: but one was still,
Hushed as a statue frozen in the moon:
It looked a woman, and her marble eye
Drank in that breathless chase across the Styx.
“Doro!” the fisher shouted, as he neared
The happy shore; the figure seemed to hear:
“Doro! dear Doro!”—but the rest was lost,
For Charon now had reached the fisher’s boat;
His black barge struck it: down it sank like lead,
The fisher with it: but he rose again,
Breasting the surges to the blessed shore
Where Doro stood, and stretched her hands to him.
He lands; she falls upon his neck, and weeps:
Then hand in hand, their happy tears forgot,
The smiling spirits go to meet their judge.—
But Charon goes back, angry, to the dead!

1856

BIRDS

Birds are singing round my window,
  Tunes the sweetest ever heard,
And I hang my cage there daily,
  But I never catch a bird.

So with thoughts my brain is peopled,
And they sing there all day long:
But they will not fold their pinions
In the little cage of song!

1857

THE SKY

The sky is a drinking cup,
That was overturned of old,
And it pours in the eyes of men
Its wine of airy gold!

We drink that wine all day,
Till the last drop is drained up,
And are lighted off to bed
By the jewels in the cup!

1857

THERE ARE GAINS FOR ALL OUR LOSSES[1]

There are gains for all our losses,
There are balms for all our pain:
But when youth, the dream, departs,
It takes something from our hearts,
And it never comes again.

We are stronger, and are better,
Under manhood's sterner reign:
Still we feel that something sweet
Followed youth, with flying feet,
And will never come again.

Something beautiful is vanished,
And we sigh for it in vain:
We behold it everywhere,
On the earth, and in the air,
But it never comes again!

1857

ADSUM[1]

DECEMBER 23-24, 1863

I

The Angel came by night,
(Such angels still come down),
And like a winter cloud
Passed over London town;
Along its lonesome streets,
Where Want had ceased to weep,
Until it reached a house
Where a great man lay asleep:
The man of all his time
Who knew the most of men,
The soundest head and heart,
The sharpest, kindest pen.
It paused beside his bed,
And whispered in his ear;
He never turned his head,
But answered, "I am here."

II

Into the night they went.
At morning, side by side,
They gained the sacred Place
Where the greatest Dead abide.
Where grand old Homer sits
In godlike state benign;
Where broods in endless thought
The awful Florentine;
Where sweet Cervantes walks,
A smile on his grave face;
Where gossips quaint Montaigne,
The wisest of his race;
Where Goethe looks through all
With that calm eye of his;
Where—little seen but Light—
The only Shakspere is!
When the new Spirit came,
They asked him, drawing near,
"Art thou become like us?"
He answered, "I am here."

1863

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

Born, Providence, Rhode Island, 1824, died at Staten Island, 1892. Curtis was born of a family in good circumstances, was privately educated, was a member of the Brook Farm community, 1842, and later lived at Concord in friendly intercourse with its famous men. He traveled in Europe and the East, 1846-1850. From 1852 he was connected with New York periodicals,—*The Tribune*, *Putnam's Monthly*, *Harper's Magazine*, and *Harper's Weekly*. He wrote and lectured much upon political reform. Curtis's chief titles are *Nile Notes of a Howadji*, 1851; *Lotus Eating*, 1852; *Prue and I*, 1856; *From the Easy Chair*, 1891-'94; *Orations and Addresses*, 1893-1894.

From PRUE AND I

A WORD TO THE GENTLE READER

An old bookkeeper, who wears a white cravat and black trousers in the morning, who rarely goes to the opera, and never dines out, is clearly a person of no fashion and of no superior sources of information. His only journey is from his house to his office; his only satisfaction is in doing his duty; his only happiness is in Prue and his children.

What romance can such a life have? What stories can such a man tell?

---

[1] This poem was later entitled *The Flight of Youth*.

[1] "I am here"; an answer to a roll-call. The poem refers to the death of Thackeray. See note 8, p. 276.

Yet I think, sometimes, when I look up from the parquet at the opera, and see Aurelia smiling in the boxes, and holding her court of love, and youth, and beauty, that the historians have not told of a fairer queen, nor the travelers seen devouter homage. And when I remember that it was in misty England that quaint old George Herbert sang of the—

> Sweet day so cool, so calm, so bright
> The bridall of the earth and skie.[1]

I am sure that I see days as lovely in our clearer air, and do not believe that Italian sunsets have a more gorgeous purple or a softer gold.

So, as the circle of my little life revolves, I console myself with believing, what I cannot help believing, that a man need not be a vagabond to enjoy the sweetest charm of travel, but that all countries and all times repeat themselves in his experience. This is an old philosophy, I am told, and much favored by those who have traveled; and I cannot but be glad that my faith has such a fine name and such competent witnesses. I am assured, however, upon the other hand, that such a faith is only imagination. But, if that be true, imagination is as good as many voyages—and how much cheaper!—a consideration which an old bookkeeper can never afford to forget.

I have not found, in my experience, that travelers always bring back with them the sunshine of Italy or the elegance of Greece. They tell us that there are such things, and that they have seen them; but, perhaps, they saw them, as the apples in the garden of the Hesperides[2] were sometimes seen—over the wall. I prefer the fruit which I can buy in the market to that which a man tells me he saw in Sicily, but of which there is no flavor in his story. Others, like Moses Primrose,[3] bring us a gross of such spectacles as we prefer not to see; so that I begin to suspect a man must have Italy and Greece in his heart and mind, if he would ever see them with his eyes.

I know that this may be only a device of that compassionate imagination designed to comfort me, who shall never take but one other journey than my daily beat. Yet there have been wise men who taught that all scenes are but pictures upon the mind; and if I can see them as I walk the street that leads to my office, or sit at the office-window looking into the court, or take a little trip down the bay or up the river, why are not my pictures as pleasant and as profitable as those which men travel for years, at great cost of time, and trouble, and money, to behold?

For my part, I do not believe that any man can see softer skies than I see in Prue's eyes; nor hear sweeter music than I hear in Prue's voice; nor find a more heaven-lighted temple than I know Prue's mind to be. And when I wish to please myself with a lovely image of peace and contentment, I do not think of the plain of Sharon, nor of the valley of Enna, nor of Arcadia, nor of Claude's pictures;[4] but, feeling that the fairest fortune of my life is the right to be named with her, I whisper gently, to myself, with a smile—for it seems as if my very heart smiled within me, when I think of her—"Prue and I."

SEA FROM SHORE

> Come unto these yellow sands.
> *The Tempest.*

> Argosies of magic sails,
> Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales.
> TENNYSON.

In the month of June, Prue and I like to walk upon the Battery[1] toward sunset, and watch the steamers, crowded with passengers, bound for the pleasant places along the coast where people pass the hot months. Sea-side lodgings are not very comfortable, I am told; but who would not be a little pinched in his chamber, if his windows looked upon the sea?

In such praises of the ocean do I indulge at such times, and so respectfully do I regard the sailors who may chance to pass, that Prue often says, with her shrewd smiles, that my mind is a kind of Greenwich Hospital,[2] full of abortive marine hopes and wishes, broken-legged intentions, blind regrets, and desires, whose hands have been shot away in some hard battle of experience, so that they cannot grasp the results towards which they reach.

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[1] From *Virtue*, by the English poet Herbert, 1593-1633.

[2] Maidens who guarded the golden apples that Earth had caused to grow as a wedding gift for Hera.

[3] A character in Goldsmith's novel *The Vicar of Wakefield;* he goes to the county fair to sell a horse, and brings back nothing in exchange but a gross of green spectacles the mountings of which are of copper.

[4] The plain of Sharon in Palestine was noted for its fertility. Enna is not a valley but a mountain in central Sicily, once rich in luxuriant gardens. Arcadia is the mythical home of ideal simplicity. Claude Lorrain was a great French landscape painter.

[1] A once fashionable park at the south end of New York City.

[2] A seamen's hospital and pensioners' home in Greenwich, England.

She is right, as usual. Such hopes and intentions do lie, ruined and hopeless now, strewn about the placid contentment of my mental life, as the old pensioners sit about the grounds at Greenwich, maimed and musing in the quiet morning sunshine. Many a one among them thinks what a Nelson he would have been if both his legs had not been prematurely carried away; or in what a Trafalgar[3] of triumph he would have ended, if, unfortunately, he had not happened to have been blown blind by the explosion of that unlucky magazine.

So I dream, sometimes, of a straight scarlet collar, stiff with gold lace, around my neck, instead of this limp white cravat; and I have even brandished my quill at the office so cutlass-wise, that Titbottom[4] has paused in his additions and looked at me as if he doubted whether I should come out quite square in my petty cash. Yet he understands it. Titbottom was born in Nantucket.

That is the secret of my fondness for the sea; I was born by it. Not more surely do Savoyards pine for the mountains, or Cockneys for the sound of Bow bells,[5] than those who are born within sight and sound of the ocean to return to it and renew their fealty. In dreams the children of the sea hear its voice.

I have read in some book of travels that certain tribes of Arabs have no name for the ocean, and that when they came to the shore for the first time, they asked with eager sadness, as if penetrated by the conviction of a superior beauty, "what is that desert of water more beautiful than the land?" And in the translations of German stories which Adoniram and the other children read, and into which I occasionally look in the evening when they are gone to bed—for I like to know what interests my children—I find that the Germans, who do not live near the sea, love the fairy lore of water, and tell the sweet stories of Undine and Melusina,[6] as if they had especial charm for them, because their country is inland.

We who know the sea have less fairy feeling about it, but our realities are romance. My earliest remembrances are of a long range of old, half dilapidated stores; red brick stores with steep wooden roofs, and stone window-frames and door-frames, which stood upon docks built as if for immense trade with all quarters of the globe.[7]

Generally there were only a few sloops moored to the tremendous posts, which I fancied could easily hold fast a Spanish Armada in a tropical hurricane. But sometimes a great ship, an East Indiaman, with rusty, seamed, blistered sides, and dingy sails, came slowly moving up the harbor, with an air of indolent self-importance and consciousness of superiority, which inspired me with profound respect. If the ship had ever chanced to run down a row-boat, or a sloop, or any specimen of smaller craft, I should only have wondered at the temerity of any floating thing in crossing the path of such supreme majesty. The ship was leisurely chained and cabled to the old dock, and then came the disembowelling.

How the stately monster had been fattening upon foreign spoils! How it had gorged itself (such galleons did never seem to me of the feminine gender) with the luscious treasures of the tropics! It had lain its lazy length along the shores of China, and sucked in whole flowery harvests of tea. The Brazilian sun flashed through the strong wicker prisons, bursting with bananas and nectarean fruits that eschew the temperate zone. Steams of camphor, of sandal-wood, arose from the hold. Sailors chanting cabalistic strains, that had to my ear a shrill and monotonous pathos, like the uniform rising and falling of an autumn wind, turned cranks that lifted the bales, and boxes, and crates, and swung them ashore.

But to my mind, the spell of their singing raised the fragrant freight, and not the crank. Madagascar and Ceylon appeared at the mystic bidding of the song. The placid sunshine of the docks was perfumed with India. The universal calm of southern seas poured from the bosom of the ship over the quiet, decaying, old northern port.

Long after the confusion of unloading was over, and the ship lay as if all voyages were ended, I dared to creep timorously along the edge of the dock, and at great risk of falling in the black water of its huge shadow, I placed my hand upon the hot hulk, and so established a mystic and exquisite connection with Pacific islands, with palm groves and all the passionate beauties they embower; with jungles, Bengal tigers, pepper, and the crushed feet of Chinese fairies. I touched Asia, the Cape of Good Hope, and the Happy Islands.[8] I would not believe that the heat I felt was of our northern sun; to my finer sympathy it burned with equatorial fervors.

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[3] The great naval victory over the French won by Admiral Nelson off Cape Trafalgar, southern Spain, in 1805.

[4] A deputy bookkeeper in the office, who drew only $900.00 a year but also had castles in Spain.

[5] Savoyards, inhabitants of the former duchy of Savoy, a mountainous district of eastern France; Cockneys, traditionally, dwellers within the sound of the bells of St. Mary le Bow, a church in central London.

[6] Undine is a water-spirit in a romance (1811) by Fouqué, Baron de la Motte, 1777-1843; Melusina, another water-spirit, is a character in an ancient French legend.

[7] Curtis's boyhood was passed in Providence, which then had a large sea-trade.

The freight was piled in the old stores. I believe that many of them remain, but they have lost their character. When I knew them, not only was I younger, but partial decay had overtaken the town; at least the bulk of its India trade had shifted to New York and Boston. But the appliances remained. There was no throng of busy traffickers, and after school, in the afternoon, I strolled by and gazed into the solemn interiors.

Silence reigned within,—silence, dimness, and piles of foreign treasure. Vast coils of cable, like tame boa-constrictors, served as seats for men with large stomachs, and heavy watch-seals, and nankeen trousers, who sat looking out of the door toward the ships, with little other sign of life than an occasional low talking, as if in their sleep. Huge hogsheads perspiring brown sugar and oozing slow molasses, as if nothing tropical could keep within bounds, but must continually expand, and exude, and overflow, stood against the walls, and had an architectural significance, for they darkly reminded me of Egyptian prints, and in the duskiness of the low-vaulted store seemed cyclopean columns incomplete. Strange festoons and heaps of bags, square piles of square boxes cased in mats, bales of airy summer stuffs, which, even in winter, scoffed at cold, and shamed it by audacious assumption of eternal sun, little specimen boxes of precious dyes that even now shine through my memory, like old Venetian schools unpainted,[9]—these were all there in rich confusion.

The stores had a twilight of dimness, the air was spicy with mingled odors. I liked to look suddenly in from the glare of sunlight outside, and then the cool sweet dimness was like the palpable breath of the far-off island-groves; and if only some parrot or macaw hung within, would flaunt with glistening plumage in his cage, and as the gay hue flashed in a chance sunbeam, call in his hard, shrill voice, as if thrusting sharp sounds upon a glistening wire from out that grateful gloom, then the enchantment was complete, and without moving, I was circumnavigating the globe.

From the old stores and the docks slowly crumbling, touched, I know not why or how, by the pensive air of past prosperity, I rambled out of town on those well-remembered afternoons, to the fields that lay upon hillsides over the harbor, and there sat, looking out to sea, fancying some distant sail proceeding to the glorious ends of the earth, to be my type and image, who would so sail, stately and successful, to all the glorious ports of the Future. Going home, I returned by the stores, which black porters were closing. But I stood long looking in, saturating my imagination, and as it appeared, my clothes, with the spicy suggestion. For when I reached home my thrifty mother—another Prue—came snuffing and smelling about me.

"Why! my son (*snuff, snuff,*) where have you been (*snuff, snuff*)? Has the baker been making (*snuff*) ginger-bread? You smell as if you'd been in (*snuff, snuff,*) a bag of cinnamon."

"I've only been on the wharves, mother."

"Well, my dear, I hope you haven't stuck up your clothes with molasses. Wharves are dirty places, and dangerous. You must take care of yourself, my son. Really this smell is (*snuff, snuff,*) very strong."

But I departed from the maternal presence, proud and happy. I was aromatic. I bore about me the true foreign air. Whoever smelt me smelt distant countries. I had nutmeg, spices, cinnamon, and cloves, without the jolly red nose. I pleased myself with being the representative of the Indies. I was in good odor with myself and all the world.

I do not know how it is, but surely Nature makes kindly provision. An imagination so easily excited as mine could not have escaped disappointment if it had had ample opportunity and experience of the lands it so longed to see. Therefore, although I made the India voyage, I have never been a traveler, and saving the little time I was ashore in India, I did not lose the sense of novelty and romance, which the first sight of foreign lands inspires.

That little time was all my foreign travel. I am glad of it. I see now that I should never have found the country from which the East Indiaman of my early days arrived. The palm groves do not grow, with which that hand laid upon the ship placed me in magic conception. As for the lovely Indian maid whom the palmy arches bowered, she has long since clasped some native lover to her bosom, and, ripened into mild maternity, how should I know her now?

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[8] The Isles of the Blest or The Fortunate Islands were imaginary lands in the western ocean; later, the names were applied to the Canary and Madeira Islands.

[9] Perhaps paintings (never done) in the rich manner of the Venetian school.

"You would find her quite as easily now as then," says my Prue, when I speak of it.

She is right again, as usual, that precious woman; and it is therefore I feel that if the chances of life have moored me fast to a bookkeeper's desk, they have left all the lands I longed to see fairer and fresher in my mind than they could ever be in my memory. Upon my only voyage I used to climb into the top and search the horizon for the shore. But now in a moment of calm thought I see a more Indian India than ever mariner discerned, and do not envy the youths who go there and make fortunes, who wear grass-cloth jackets, drink iced beer, and eat curry; whose minds fall asleep, and whose bodies have liver complaints.

Unseen by me forever, nor ever regretted, shall wave the Egyptian palms and the Italian pines. Untrodden by me, the Forum shall still echo with the footfall of imperial Rome, and the Parthenon unrifled of its marbles, look, perfect, across the Ægean blue.

My young friends return from their foreign tours elate with the smiles of a nameless Italian or Parisian belle. I know not such cheap delights; I am a suitor of Vittoria Colonna;[10] I walk with Tasso[11] along the terraced garden of the Villa d'Este, and look to see Beatrice smiling down the rich gloom of the cypress shade. You stayed at the *Hôtel Europa* in Venice, at *Danielli's,* or the *Leone bianco;*[12] I am the guest of Marino Faliero, and I whisper to his wife as we climb the giant staircase in the summer moonlight,

Ah! senza amare
Andare sul mare,
Col sposo del mare,
Non puo consolare.[13]

It is for the same reason that I did not care to dine with you and Aurelia, that I am content not to stand in St. Peter's. Alas! if I could see the end of it, it would not be St. Peter's. For those of us whom Nature means to keep at home, she provides entertainment. One man goes four thousand miles to Italy, and does not see it, he is so short-sighted. Another is so far-sighted that he stays in his room and sees more than Italy.

But for this very reason that it washes the shores of my possible Europe and Asia, the sea draws me constantly to itself. Before I came to New York, while I was still a clerk in Boston, courting Prue, and living out of town, I never knew of a ship sailing for India or even for England and France, but I went up to the State House cupola or to the observatory on some friend's house in Roxbury, where I could not be interrupted, and there watched the departure.

The sails hung ready; the ship lay in the stream; busy little boats and puffing steamers darted about it, clung to its sides, paddled away for it, or led the way to sea, as minnows might pilot a whale. The anchor was slowly swung at the bow; I could not hear the sailors' song, but I knew they were singing. I could not see the parting friends, but I knew farewells were spoken. I did not share the confusion, although I knew what bustle there was, what hurry, what shouting, what creaking, what fall of ropes and iron, what sharp oaths, low laughs, whispers, sobs. But I was cool, high, separate. To me it was

a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.[14]

The sails were shaken out, and the ship began to move. It was a fair breeze, perhaps, and no steamer was needed to tow her away. She receded down the bay. Friends turned back—I could not see them—and waved their hands, and wiped their eyes, and went home to dinner. Farther and farther from the ships at anchor, the lessening vessel became single and solitary upon the water. The sun sank in the west; but I watched her still. Every flash of her sails, as she tacked and turned, thrilled my heart.

Yet Prue was not on board. I had never seen one of the passengers or the crew. I did not know the consignees, nor the name of the vessel. I had shipped no adventure, nor risked any insurance, nor made any bet, but my eyes clung to her as Ariadne's to the fading sail of Theseus.[15] The ship was freighted with more than appeared upon her papers, yet she was not a smuggler. She bore all there was of that nameless lading, yet the next ship would carry as much. She was freighted with fancy. My hopes, and wishes, and vague desires, were all on board. It seemed to me a treasure not less rich than that which filled the East Indiaman at the old dock in my boyhood.

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[10] An Italian poet,—the only woman known to have been beloved by Michael Angelo.

[11] One of the four greatest Italian poets; he served the family of Este, whose seat of power was Ferrara. He is said to have loved the princess Leonora Este. Curtis may have confused Tasso's experiences there with those of the poet Boiardo, of a century before, who was patronized by Duke Hercules D'Este, whose daughter Beatrice was one of the most beautiful and accomplished women of Italy. Later, as Duchess of Milan she was herself a patron of art and letters.

[12] "The White Lion," a hotel in Venice. Marino Faliero, doge (ruler) of Venice, died 1355.

[13] Ah, without love to put forth to sea with the consort of the sea,—for that there is no solace.

[14] From Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner,* Part II.

When, at length, the ship was a sparkle upon the horizon, I waved my hand in last farewell, I strained my eyes for a last glimpse. My mind had gone to sea, and had left noise behind. But now I heard again the multitudinous murmur of the city, and went down rapidly, and threaded the short, narrow, streets to the office. Yet, believe it, every dream of that day, as I watched the vessel, was written at night to Prue. She knew my heart had not sailed away.

Those days are long past now, but still I walk upon the Battery and look towards the Narrows, and know that beyond them, separated only by the sea, are many of whom I would so gladly know, and so rarely hear. The sea rolls between us like the lapse of dusky ages. They trusted themselves to it, and it bore them away far and far as if into the past. Last night I read of Antony, but I have not heard from Christopher these many months, and by so much farther away is he, so much older and more remote than Antony. As for William, he is as vague as any of the shepherd kings of ante-Pharaonic dynasties.

It is the sea that has done it, it has carried them off and put them away upon its other side. It is fortunate the sea did not put them upon its under-side. Are they hale and happy still? Is their hair gray, and have they mustachios? Or have they taken to wigs and crutches? Are they popes or cardinals yet? Do they feast with Lucrezia Borgia,[16] or preach red republicanism to the Council of Ten?[17] Do they sing, *Behold how brightly breaks the morning* with Masaniello?[18] Do they laugh at Ulysses and skip ashore to the Sirens?[19] Has Mesrour, chief of the Eunuchs, caught them with Zobeide[20] in the Caliph's garden, or have they made cheese cakes without pepper? Friends of my youth, where in your wanderings have you tasted the blissful Lotus,[21] that you neither come nor send us tidings?

Across the sea also came idle rumors, as false reports steal into history and defile fair fames. Was it longer ago than yesterday that I walked with my cousin, then recently a widow, and talked with her of the countries to which she meant to sail? She was young, and dark-eyed, and wore great hoops of gold, barbaric gold, in her ears. The hope of Italy, the thought of living there, had risen like a dawn in the darkness of her mind. I talked and listened by rapid turns.

Was it longer ago than yesterday that she told me of her splendid plans, how palaces tapestried with gorgeous paintings should be cheaply hired, and the best of teachers lead her children to the completest and most various knowledge; how,—and with her slender pittance!—she should have a box at the opera, and a carriage, and liveried servants, and in perfect health and youth, lead a perfect life in a perfect climate?

And now what do I hear? Why does a tear sometimes drop so audibly upon my paper, that Titbottom looks across with a sort of mild rebuking glance of inquiry, whether it is kind to let even a single tear fall, when an ocean of tears is pent up in hearts that would burst and overflow if but one drop should force its way out? Why across the sea came faint gusty stories, like low voices in the wind, of a cloistered garden and sunny seclusion—and a life of unknown and unexplained luxury. What is this picture of a pale face showered with streaming black hair, and large sad eyes looking upon lovely and noble children playing in the sunshine—and a brow pained with thought straining into their destiny? Who is this figure, a man tall and comely, with melting eyes and graceful motion, who comes and goes at pleasure, who is not a husband, yet has the key of the cloistered garden?

I do not know. They are secrets of the sea. The pictures pass before my mind suddenly and unawares, and I feel the tears rising that I would gladly repress. Titbottom looks at me, then stands by the window of the office and leans his brow against the cold iron bars, and looks down into the little square paved court. I take my hat and steal out of the office for a few minutes, and slowly pace the hurrying streets. Meek-eyed Alice! magnificent Maud! sweet baby Lilian! why does the sea imprison you so far away, when will you return, where do you linger? The water laps idly about the docks,—lies calm, or gaily heaves. Why does it bring me doubts and fears now, that brought such bounty of beauty in the days long gone?

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[15] All the various myths concerning the loves of Theseus and Ariadne, although differing as to the cause, agree that Theseus left Ariadne on the island of Naxos.

[16] Lucrezia, 1480-1519, one of the famous Italian family of Borgia, a patron of learning and art.

[17] A powerful secret tribunal instituted when Venice was a republic.

[18] A song in the opera *La Muette de Portici*, better known as *Masaniello*, produced in 1828 by Auber, the French composer.

[19] The sirens were sea-nymphs who by their songs tempted seamen passing their island to turn aside from their course, and then destroyed them. Ulysses filled the ears of his companions with wax so that they could not hear the music.

[20] Wife of the caliph Harun al Raschid in the *Arabian Nights*.

[21] A plant of northern Africa whose fruit, it was said, caused travelers to wish no longer to return to their native land. See Tennyson's *The Lotus Eaters*.

I remember that the day when my dark-haired cousin, with hoops of barbaric gold in her ears, sailed for Italy, was quarter-day, and we balanced the books at the office. It was nearly noon, and in my impatience to be away, I had not added my columns with sufficient care. The inexorable hand of the office clock pointed sternly towards twelve, and the remorseless pendulum ticked solemnly to noon.

To a man whose pleasures are not many, and rather small, the loss of such an event as saying farewell and wishing God-speed to a friend going to Europe, is a great loss. It was so to me, especially, because there was always more to me, in every departure, than the parting and the farewell. I was gradually renouncing this pleasure, as I saw small prospect of ending before noon, when Titbottom, after looking at me a moment, came to my side of the desk, and said:

"I should like to finish that for you."

I looked at him: poor Titbottom! he had no friends to wish God-speed upon any journey. I quietly wiped my pen, took down my hat, and went out. It was in the days of sail packets and less regularity, when going to Europe was more of an epoch in life. How gaily my cousin stood upon the deck and detailed to me her plan! How merrily the children shouted and sang! How long I held my cousin's little hand in mine, and gazed into her great eyes, remembering that they would see and touch the things that were invisible to me for ever, but all the more precious and fair! She kissed me—I was younger then—there were tears, I remember, and prayers, and promises, a waving handkerchief,—a fading sail.

It was only the other day that I saw another parting of the same kind. I was not a principal, only a spectator; but so fond am I of sharing, afar off, as it were, and unseen, the sympathies of human beings, that I cannot avoid often going to the dock upon steamer-days and giving myself to that pleasant and melancholy observation. There is always a crowd, but this day it was almost impossible to advance through the masses of people. The eager faces hurried by; a constant stream poured up the gangway into the steamer, and the upper deck, to which I gradually made my way, was crowded with the passengers and their friends.

There was one group upon which my eyes first fell, and upon which my memory lingers. A glance, brilliant as daybreak,—a voice,

> Her voice's music,—call it the well's bubbling, the bird's warble,

a goddess girdled with flowers, and smiling farewell upon a circle of worshipers, to each one of whom that gracious calmness made the smile sweeter, and the farewell more sad—other figures, other flowers, an angel face—all these I saw in that group as I was swayed up and down the deck by the eager swarm of people. The hour came, and I went on shore with the rest. The plank was drawn away—the captain raised his hand—the huge steamer slowly moved—a cannon was fired—the ship was gone.

The sun sparkled upon the water as they sailed away. In five minutes the steamer was as much separated from the shore as if it had been at sea a thousand years.

I leaned against a post upon the dock and looked around. Ranged upon the edge of the wharf stood that band of worshipers, waving handkerchiefs and straining their eyes to see the last smile of farewell—did any eager selfish eye hope to see a tear? They to whom the handkerchiefs were waved stood high upon the stern, holding flowers. Over them hung the great flag, raised by the gentle wind into the graceful folds of a canopy,—say rather a gorgeous gonfalon waved over the triumphant departure, over that supreme youth, and bloom, and beauty, going out across the mystic ocean to carry a finer charm and more human splendor into those realms of my imagination beyond the sea.

"You will return, O youth and beauty!" I said to my dreaming and foolish self, as I contemplated those fair figures, "richer than Alexander with Indian spoils.[22] All that historic association, that copious civilization, those grandeurs and graces of art, that variety and picturesqueness of life, will mellow and deepen your experience even as time silently touches those old pictures into a more persuasive and pathetic beauty, and as this increasing summer sheds ever softer lustre upon the landscape. You will return conquerors and not conquered. You will bring Europe, even as Aurelian brought Zenobia captive,[23] to deck your homeward triumph. I do not wonder that these clouds break away, I do not wonder that the sun presses out and floods all the air, and land, and water, with light that graces with happy omens your stately farewell."

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[22] Alexander the Great in 327 B. C. invaded India.

But if my faded face looked after them with such earnest and longing emotion,—I, a solitary old man, unknown to those fair beings, and standing apart from that band of lovers, yet in that moment bound more closely to them than they knew,—how was it with those whose hearts sailed away with that youth and beauty? I watched them closely from behind my post. I knew that life had paused with them; that the world stood still. I knew that the long, long summer would be only a yearning regret. I knew that each asked himself the mournful question, "Is this parting typical—this slow, sad, sweet, recession?" And I knew that they did not care to ask whether they should meet again, nor dare to contemplate the chances of the sea.

The steamer swept on, she was near Staten Island, and a final gun boomed far and low across the water. The crowd was dispersing, but the little group remained. Was it not all Hood had sung?

> I saw thee, lovely Inez,
> Descend along the shore,
> With bands of noble gentlemen,
> And banners waved before;
> And gentle youths and maidens gay,
> And snowy plumes they wore;—
> It would have been a beauteous dream,—
> If it had been no more![24]

"O youth!" I said to them without speaking, "be it gently said, as it is solemnly thought, should they return no more, yet in your memories the high hour of their loveliness is for ever enshrined. Should they come no more they never will be old, nor changed, to you. You will wax and wane, you will suffer, and struggle, and grow old; but this summer vision will smile, immortal, upon your lives, and those fair faces shall shed, forever, from under that slowly waving flag, hope and peace."

It is so elsewhere; it is the tenderness of Nature. Long, long ago we lost our first-born, Prue and I. Since then, we have grown older and our children with us. Change comes, and grief, perhaps, and decay. We are happy, our children are obedient and gay. But should Prue live until she has lost us all, and laid us, gray and weary, in our graves, she will have always one babe in her heart. Every mother who has lost an infant, has gained a child of immortal youth. Can you find comfort here, lovers, whose mistress has sailed away?

I did not ask the question aloud, I thought it only, as I watched the youths, and turned away while they still stood gazing. One, I observed, climbed a post and waved his black hat before the white-washed side of the shed over the dock, whence I supposed he would tumble into the water. Another had tied a handkerchief to the end of a somewhat baggy umbrella, and in the eagerness of gazing, had forgotten to wave it, so that it hung mournfully down, as if overpowered with grief it could not express. The entranced youth still held the umbrella aloft. It seemed to me as if he had struck his flag; or as if one of my cravats were airing in that sunlight. A negro carter was joking with an apple-woman at the entrance of the dock. The steamer was out of sight.

I found that I was belated and hurried back to my desk. Alas! poor lovers; I wonder if they are watching still? Has he fallen exhausted from the post into the water? Is that handkerchief, bleached and rent, still pendant upon that somewhat baggy umbrella?

"Youth and beauty went to Europe today," said I to Prue, as I stirred my tea at evening.

As I spoke, our youngest daughter brought me the sugar. She is just eighteen, and her name should be Hebe.[25] I took a lump of sugar and looked at her. She had never seemed so lovely, and as I dropped the lump in my cup, I kissed her. I glanced at Prue as I did so. The dear woman smiled, but did not answer my exclamation.

Thus, without traveling, I travel, and share the emotions of those I do not know. But sometimes the old longing comes over me as in the days when I timidly touched the huge East Indiaman, and magnetically sailed around the world.

It was but a few days after the lovers and I waved farewell to the steamer, and while the lovely figures standing under the great gonfalon were as vivid in my mind as ever, that a day of premature sunny sadness, like those of the Indian summer, drew me away from the office early in the afternoon: for fortunately it is our dull season now, and even Titbottom sometimes leaves the office by five o'clock. Although why he should leave it, or where he goes, or what he does, I do not well know. Before I knew him, I used sometimes to meet him with a man whom I was afterwards told was Bartleby, the scrivener.[26] Even then it seemed to me that they rather clubbed their loneliness than made society for each other. Recently I have not seen Bartleby; but Titbottom seems no more solitary because he is alone.

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[23] Aurelian, Roman Emperor from 270 to 275, having conquered Palmyra, east of Syria, took Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, to Rome.

[24] From Hood's *Fair Ines.*

[25] Goddess of youth and spring, cupbearer of the gods.

I strolled into the Battery as I sauntered about. Staten Island looked so alluring, tender-hued with summer and melting in the haze, that I resolved to indulge myself in a pleasure-trip. It was a little selfish, perhaps, to go alone, but I looked at my watch, and saw that if I should hurry home for Prue the trip would be lost; then I should be disappointed, and she would be grieved.

Ought I not rather (I like to begin questions, which I am going to answer affirmatively, with *ought,*) to take the trip and recount my adventures to Prue upon my return, whereby I should actually enjoy the excursion and the pleasure of telling her; while she would enjoy my story and be glad that I was pleased? Ought I wilfully to deprive us both of this various enjoyment by aiming at a higher, which, in losing, we should lose all?

Unfortunately, just as I was triumphantly answering "Certainly not!" another question marched into my mind, escorted by a very defiant *ought.*

"Ought I to go when I have such a debate about it?"

But while I was perplexed, and scoffing at my own scruples, the ferry-bell suddenly rang, and answered all my questions. Involuntarily I hurried on board. The boat slipped from the dock. I went up on deck to enjoy the view of the city from the bay, but just as I sat down, and meant to have said "how beautiful!" I found myself asking:

"Ought I to have come?"

Lost in perplexing debate, I saw little of the scenery of the bay; but the remembrance of Prue and the gentle influence of the day plunged me into a mood of pensive reverie which nothing tended to destroy, until we suddenly arrived at the landing.

As I was stepping ashore, I was greeted by Mr. Bourne,[27] who passes the summer on the island, and who hospitably asked if I were going his way. His way was toward the southern end of the island, and I said yes. His pockets were full of papers and his brow of wrinkles; so when we reached the point where he should turn off, I asked him to let me alight, although he was very anxious to carry me wherever I was going.

"I am only strolling about," I answered, as I clambered carefully out of the wagon.

"Strolling about?" asked he, in a bewildered manner; "do people stroll about, now-a-days?"

"Sometimes," I answered, smiling, as I pulled my trousers down over my boots, for they had dragged up, as I stepped out of the wagon, "and beside, what can an old book-keeper do better in the dull season than stroll about this pleasant island, and watch the ships at sea?"

Bourne looked at me with his weary eyes.

"I'd give five thousand dollars a year for a dull season," said he, "but as for strolling, I've forgotten how."

As he spoke, his eyes wandered dreamily across the fields and woods, and were fastened upon the distant sails.

"It is pleasant," he said musingly, and fell into silence. But I had no time to spare, so I wished him good-afternoon.

"I hope your wife is well," said Bourne to me, as I turned away. Poor Bourne! He drove on alone in his wagon.

But I made haste to the most solitary point upon the southern shore, and there sat, glad to be so near the sea. There was that warm, sympathetic silence in the air, that gives to Indian-summer days almost a human tenderness of feeling. A delicate haze, that seemed only the kindly air made visible, hung over the sea. The water lapped languidly among the rocks, and the voices of children in a boat beyond, rang musically, and gradually receded, until they were lost in the distance.

It was some time before I was aware of the outline of a large ship, drawn vaguely upon the mist, which I supposed, at first, to be only a kind of mirage. But the more steadfastly I gazed, the more distinct it became, and I could no longer doubt that I saw a stately ship lying at anchor, not more than half a mile from the land.

"It is an extraordinary place to anchor," I said to myself, "or can she be ashore?"

[26] copyist

[27] A millionaire who had once been in love with Prue and was still unmarried.

There were no signs of distress; the sails were carefully clewed up, and there were no sailors in the tops, nor upon the shrouds. A flag, of which I could not see the device or the nation, hung heavily at the stern, and looked as if it had fallen asleep. My curiosity began to be singularly excited. The form of the vessel seemed not to be permanent; but within a quarter of an hour, I was sure that I had seen half a dozen different ships. As I gazed, I saw no more sails nor masts, but a long range of oars, flashing like a golden fringe, or straight and stiff, like the legs of a sea-monster.

"It is some bloated crab, or lobster, magnified by the mist," I said to myself, complacently.

But, at the same moment, there was a concentrated flashing and blazing in one spot among the rigging, and it was as if I saw a beatified ram, or, more truly, a sheep-skin, splendid as the hair of Berenice.[28]

"Is that the golden fleece?" I thought. "But, surely, Jason and the Argonauts have gone home long since. Do people go on gold-fleecing expeditions now?" I asked myself, in perplexity. "Can this be a California steamer?"

How could I have thought it a steamer? Did I not see those sails, "thin and sere"?[29] Did I not feel the melancholy of that solitary bark? It had a mystic aura; a boreal brilliancy shimmered in its wake, for it was drifting seaward. A strange fear curdled along my veins. That summer sun shone cool. The weary, battered ship was gashed, as if gnawed by ice. There was terror in the air, as a "skinny hand so brown" waved to me from the deck. I lay as one bewitched. The hand of the ancient mariner seemed to be reaching for me, like the hand of death.

Death? Why, as I was inly praying Prue's forgiveness for my solitary ramble and consequent demise, a glance like the fulness of summer splendor gushed over me; the odor of flowers and of eastern gums made all the atmosphere. I breathed the orient, and lay drunk with balm, while that strange ship, a golden galley now, with glittering draperies festooned with flowers, paced to the measured beat of oars along the calm, and Cleopatra smiled alluringly from the great pageant's heart.[30]

Was this a barge for summer waters, this peculiar ship I saw? It had a ruined dignity, a cumbrous grandeur, although its masts were shattered, and its sails rent. It hung preternaturally still upon the sea, as if tormented and exhausted by long driving and drifting. I saw no sailors, but a great Spanish ensign floated over, and waved, a funereal plume. I knew it then. The armada was long since scattered; but, floating far

on desolate rainy seas,

lost for centuries, and again restored to sight, here lay one of the fated ships of Spain. The huge galleon seemed to fill all the air, built up against the sky, like the gilded ships of Claude Lorraine[31] against the sunset.

But it fled, for now a black flag fluttered at the mast-head—a long low vessel darted swiftly where the vast ship lay; there came a shrill piping whistle, the clash of cutlasses, fierce ringing oaths, sharp pistol cracks, the thunder of command, and over all the gusty yell of a demoniac chorus,

My name was Robert Kidd, when I sailed.

—There were no clouds longer, but under a serene sky I saw a bark moving with festal pomp, thronged with grave senators in flowing robes, and one with ducal bonnet in the midst, holding a ring. The smooth bark swam upon a sea like that of southern latitudes. I saw the *Bucentoro* and the nuptials of Venice and the Adriatic.[32]

Who were those coming over the side? Who crowded the boats, and sprang into the water, men in old Spanish armor, with plumes and swords, and bearing a glittering cross? Who was he standing upon the deck with folded arms and gazing towards the shore, as lovers on their mistresses and martyrs upon heaven? Over what distant and tumultuous seas had this small craft escaped from other centuries and distant shores? What sounds of foreign hymns, forgotten now, were these, and what solemnity of debarkation? Was this grave form Columbus?

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[28] Wife of Ptolemy Euergetes, King of Egypt 247-222 B. C. To insure the safe return of her husband from a military expedition, she sacrificed to the gods her beautiful hair. It was later believed to have been turned into the constellation Coma Berenices. Jason, a mythical Greek, sailed with other heroes in the ship Argo to Cholchis to obtain the golden fleece. Medea, the daughter of Æëtes, king of that land, enabled Jason to fulfil her father's conditions and to overcome the dragon that guarded the fleece.

[29] Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner,* Part V.

[30] Shakspere's *Antony and Cleopatra,* II. ii. 196, ff.

[31] See note 56, p. 717.

[32] In the ceremony of wedding the Adriatic, the doge, from the *Bucentaur,* the Venetian state galley, dropped a ring into the sea, saying, "We espouse thee, Sea, in token of true and lasting dominion." This was to commemorate the victory of the Venetians over Frederick Barbarossa, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, 1155-1189.

Yet these were not so Spanish as they seemed just now. This group of stern-faced men with high peaked hats, who knelt upon the cold deck and looked out upon a shore which, I could see by their joyless smile of satisfaction, was rough, and bare, and forbidding. In that soft afternoon, standing in mournful groups upon the small deck, why did they seem to me to be seeing the sad shores of wintry New England? That phantom-ship could not be the *Mayflower!*

I gazed long upon the shifting illusion.

"If I should board this ship," I asked myself, "where should I go? whom should I meet? what should I see? Is not this the vessel that shall carry me to my Europe, my foreign countries, my impossible India, the Atlantis[33] that I have lost?"

As I sat staring at it I could not but wonder whether Bourne had seen this sail when he looked upon the water? Does he see such sights every day, because he lives down here? Is it not perhaps a magic yacht of his; and does he slip off privately after business hours to Venice, and Spain, and Egypt, perhaps to El Dorado? Does he run races with Ptolemy Philopater, and Hiero of Syracuse, rare regattas on fabulous seas?[34]

Why not? He is a rich man, too, and why should not a New York merchant do what a Syracuse tyrant and an Egyptian prince did? Has Bourne's yacht those sumptuous chambers, like Philopater's galley, of which the greater part was made of split cedar, and of Milesian cypress; and has he twenty doors put together with beams of citron-wood, with many ornaments? Has the roof of his cabin a carved golden face, and is his sail linen with a purple fringe?

"I suppose it is so," I said to myself, as I looked wistfully at the ship, which began to glimmer and melt in the haze.

"It certainly is not a fishing-smack?" I asked, doubtfully.

No, it must be Bourne's magic yacht; I was sure of it. I could not help laughing at poor old Hiero, whose cabins were divided into many rooms, with floors composed of mosaic work, of all kinds of stones tesselated. And, on this mosaic, the whole story of the Iliad was depicted in a marvelous manner. He had gardens "of all sorts of most wonderful beauty, enriched with all sorts of plants, and shadowed by roofs of lead or tiles. And, besides this, there were tents roofed with boughs of white ivy and of the vine —the roots of which derived their moisture from casks full of earth, and were watered in the same manner as the gardens. There were temples, also, with doors of ivory and citron-wood, furnished in the most exquisite manner, with pictures and statues, and with goblets and vases of every form and shape imaginable."

"Poor Bourne!" I said. "I suppose his is finer than Hiero's, which is a thousand years old. Poor Bourne! I don't wonder that his eyes are weary, and that he would pay so dearly for a day of leisure. Dear me! is it one of the prices that must be paid for wealth, the keeping of a magic yacht?"

Involuntarily, I had asked the question aloud.

"The magic yacht is not Bourne's," answered a familiar voice. I looked up, and Titbottom stood by my side. "Do you not know that all Bourne's money would not buy the yacht?" asked he. "He cannot even see it. And if he could, it would be no magic yacht to him, but only a battered and solitary hulk."

The haze blew gently away, as Titbottom spoke, and there lay my Spanish galleon, my *Bucentoro,* my Cleopatra's galley, Columbus's *Santa Maria,* and the Pilgrims' *Mayflower,* an old bleaching wreck upon the beach.

"Do you suppose any true love is in vain?" asked Titbottom solemnly, as he stood bareheaded, and the soft sunset wind played with his few hairs. "Could Cleopatra smile upon Antony, and the moon upon Endymion,[35] and the sea not love its lovers?"

The fresh air breathed upon our faces as he spoke. I might have sailed in Hiero's ship, or in Roman galleys, had I lived long centuries ago, and been born a nobleman. But would it be so sweet a remembrance, that of lying on a marble couch, under a golden-faced roof, and within doors of citron-wood and ivory, and sailing in that state to greet queens who are mummies now, as that of seeing those fair figures, standing under the great gonfalon, themselves as lovely as Egyptian belles, and going to see more than Egypt dreamed?

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[33] An island northwest of Africa, believed to have been swallowed up in a cataclysm. Plato makes it the seat of the ideal commonwealth.

[34] Ptolemy Philopator was king of Egypt, 221-204 B. C.; Hiero, Tyrant of Syracuse, 478 B. C., maintained a great fleet.

[35] He fell in love with Selene, the moon, who kissed him as he lay sleeping on Mt. Latmos. Cf. Keats's *Endymion.*

The yacht was mine, then, and not Bourne's. I took Titbottom's arm, and we sauntered toward the ferry. What sumptuous sultan was I, with this sad vizier? My languid odalisque,[36] the sea, lay at my feet as we advanced, and sparkled all over with a sunset smile. Had I trusted myself to her arms, to be borne to the realms that I shall never see, or sailed long voyages towards Cathay,[37] I am not sure I should have brought a more precious present to Prue, than the story of that afternoon.

"Ought I to have gone alone?" I asked her, as I ended.

"I ought not to have gone with you," she replied, "for I had work to do. But how strange that you should see such things at Staten Island. I never did, Mr. Titbottom," said she, turning to my deputy, whom I had asked to tea.

"Madam," answered Titbottom, with a kind of wan and quaint dignity, so that I could not help thinking he must have arrived in that stray ship from the Spanish armada, "neither did Mr. Bourne."

1856

THE PUBLIC DUTY OF EDUCATED MEN[1]

It is with diffidence that I rise to add any words of mine to the music of these younger voices. This day, gentlemen of the graduating class, is especially yours. It is a day of high hope and expectation, and the counsels that fall from older lips should be carefully weighed, lest they chill the ardor of a generous enthusiasm or stay the all-conquering faith of youth that moves the world. To those who, constantly and actively engaged in a thousand pursuits, are still persuaded that educated intelligence molds states and leads mankind, no day in the year is more significant, more inspiring, than this of the college commencement. It matters not at what college it may be celebrated. It is the same at all. We stand here indeed beneath these college walls, beautiful for situation, girt at this moment with the perfumed splendor of midsummer, and full of tender memories and joyous associations to those who hear me. But on this day, and on other days, at a hundred other colleges, this summer sun beholds the same spectacle of eager and earnest throngs. The faith that we hold, they also cherish. It is the same God that is worshiped at the different altars. It is the same benediction that descends upon every reverent head and believing heart. In this annual celebration of faith in the power and the responsibility of educated men, all the colleges in the country, in whatever state, of whatever age, of whatever religious sympathy or direction, form but one great Union University.

But the interest of the day is not that of mere study, of sound scholarship as an end, of good books for their own sake, but of education as a power in human affairs, of educated men as an influence in the commonwealth. "Tell me," said an American scholar of Goethe, the many-sided, "what did he ever do for the cause of man?" The scholar, the poet, the philosopher, are men among other men. From these unavoidable social relations spring opportunities and duties. How do they use them? How do they discharge them? Does the scholar show in his daily walk that he has studied the wisdom of ages in vain? Does the poet sing of angelic purity and lead an unclean life? Does the philosopher peer into other worlds, and fail to help this world upon its way? Four years before our civil war, the same scholar—it was Theodore Parker[2]—said sadly: "If our educated men had done their duty, we should not now be in the ghastly condition we bewail." The theme of today seems to me to be prescribed by the occasion. It is the festival of the departure of a body of educated young men into the world. This company of picked recruits marches out with beating drums and flying colors to join the army. We who feel that our fate is gracious which allowed a liberal training, are here to welcome and to advise. On your behalf, Mr. President and gentlemen, with your authority, and with all my heart, I shall say a word to them and to you of the public duty of educated men in America.

I shall not assume, gentlemen graduates, for I know that it is not so, that what Dr. Johnson says of the teachers of Rasselas[3] and the princes of Abyssinia can be truly said of you in your happy valley: "The sages who instructed them told them of nothing but the miseries of public life, and described all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity where discord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man." The sages who have instructed you are American citizens. They know that patriotism has its glorious opportunities and its sacred duties. They have not shunned the one, and they have well performed the other. In the sharpest stress of our awful conflict, a clear voice of patriotic warning was heard from these peaceful academic shades, the voice of the venerated teacher[4] whom this university still freshly deplores, drawing from the wisdom of experience stored in his ample learning, a lesson of startling cogency and power from the history of Greece for the welfare of America.

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[36] female slave

[37] Ancient name for northern China, and, by extension, the Orient.

[1] This oration was delivered at the commencement exercises of Union College, N. Y., in June, 1877, Curtis being at that time honorary Chancellor of the institution.

[2] A noted clergyman of Boston, 1810-1860.

[3] Rasselas, the hero of the story by Dr. Samuel Johnson, lived with his brothers, the princes of Abyssinia, in a Happy Valley where no evil could enter. Here they awaited their succession to the throne.

This was the discharge of a public duty by an educated man. It illustrated an indispensable condition of a progressive republic, the active, practical interest in politics of the most intelligent citizens. Civil and religious liberty in this country can be preserved only through the agency of our political institutions. But those institutions alone will not suffice. It is not the ship so much as the skilful sailing that assures the prosperous voyage. American institutions presuppose not only general honesty and intelligence in the people, but their constant and direct application to public affairs. Our system rests upon all the people, not upon a part of them, and the citizen who evades his share of the burden betrays his fellows. Our safety lies not in our institutions but in ourselves. It was under the forms of the republic that Julius Cæsar made himself emperor of Rome. It was professing reverence for the national traditions that James the Second was destroying religious liberty in England. To labor, said the old monks, is to pray. What we earnestly desire we earnestly toil for. That she may be prized more truly, heaven-eyed Justice flies from us, like the Tartar maid from her lovers, and she yields her embrace at last only to the swiftest and most daring of her pursuers.

By the words public duty I do not necessarily mean official duty, although it may include that. I mean simply that constant and active practical participation in the details of politics without which, upon the part of the most intelligent citizens, the conduct of public affairs falls under the control of selfish and ignorant, or crafty and venal men. I mean that personal attention which, as it must be incessant, is often wearisome and even repulsive, to the details of politics, attendance at meetings, service upon committees, care and trouble and expense of many kinds, patient endurance of rebuffs, chagrins, ridicules, disappointments, defeats—in a word, all those duties and services which, when selfishly and meanly performed, stigmatize a man as a mere politician; but whose constant, honorable, intelligent, and vigilant performance is the gradual building, stone by stone, and layer by layer, of that great temple of self-restrained liberty which all generous souls mean that our government shall be.

Public duty in this country is not discharged, as is so often supposed, by voting. A man may vote regularly, and still fail essentially of his political duty, as the Pharisee who gave tithes of all that he possessed, and fasted three times in the week, yet lacked the very heart of religion. When an American citizen is content with voting merely, he consents to accept what is often a doubtful alternative. His first duty is to help shape the alternative. This, which was formerly less necessary, is now indispensable. In a rural community such as this country was a hundred years ago, whoever was nominated for office was known to his neighbors, and the consciousness of that knowledge was a conservative influence in determining nominations. But in the local elections of the great cities of today, elections that control taxation and expenditure, the mass of the voters vote in absolute ignorance of the candidates. The citizen who supposes that he does all his duty when he votes, places a premium upon political knavery. Thieves welcome him to the polls and offer him a choice, which he has done nothing to prevent, between Jeremy Diddler[5] and Dick Turpin.[6] The party cries for which he is responsible are: "Turpin and Honesty," "Diddler and Reform." And within a few years, as a result of this indifference to the details of public duty, the most powerful politician in the Empire State of the Union was Jonathan Wild,[7] the Great, the captain of a band of plunderers. I know it is said that the knaves have taken the honest men in a net, and have contrived machinery which will inevitably grind only the grist of rascals. The answer is, that when honest men did once what they ought to do always, the thieves were netted and their machine was broken.[8] To say that in this country the rogues must rule, is to defy history and to despair of the republic. It is to repeat the imbecile executive cries of sixteen years ago, "Oh dear! the states have no right to go"; and, "Oh dear! the nation has no right to help itself."[9] Let the Union, stronger than ever and unstained with national wrong, teach us the power of patriotic virtue—and Ludlow street jail console those who suppose that American politics must necessarily be a game of thieves and bullies.

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[4] Dr. Tayler Lewis of Union College, who had died but a few weeks before the delivery of this address had published in 1864 a work entitled *States' Rights, a Photograph of the Ruins of Ancient Greece.*

[5] A character in Kenney's play *Raising the Wind*, who lives entirely off others.

[6] An English highwayman executed in 1739.

[7] An English receiver of stolen goods hanged in 1725 at Tyburn, the public place of execution in London.

If ignorance and corruption and intrigue control the primary meeting, and manage the convention, and dictate the nomination, the fault is in the honest and intelligent workshop and office, in the library and the parlor, in the church and the school. When they are as constant and faithful to their political rights as the slums and the grog-shops, the pool-rooms and the kennels; when the educated, industrious, temperate, thrifty citizens are as zealous and prompt and unfailing in political activity as the ignorant and venal and mischievous, or when it is plain that they cannot be roused to their duty, then, but not until then—if ignorance and corruption always carry the day—there can be no honest question that the republic has failed. But let us not be deceived. While good men sit at home, not knowing that there is anything to be done, nor caring to know; cultivating a feeling that politics are tiresome and dirty, and politicians vulgar bullies and bravoes; half persuaded that a republic is the contemptible rule of a mob, and secretly longing for a splendid and vigorous despotism—then remember it is not a government mastered by ignorance, it is a government betrayed by intelligence; it is not the victory of the slums, it is the surrender of the schools; it is not that bad men are brave, but that good men are infidels and cowards.

But, gentlemen, when you come to address yourselves to these primary public duties, your first surprise and dismay will be the discovery that, in a country where education is declared to be the hope of its institutions, the higher education is often practically held to be almost a disadvantage. You will go from these halls to hear a very common sneer at college-bred men—to encounter a jealousy of education as making men visionary and pedantic and impracticable—to confront a belief that there is something enfeebling in the higher education, and that self-made men, as they are called, are the sure stay of the state. But what is really meant by a self-made man? It is a man of native sagacity and strong character, who was taught, it is proudly said, only at the plow or the anvil or the bench. He was schooled by adversity, and was polished by hard attrition with men. He is Benjamin Franklin, the printer's boy, or Abraham Lincoln, the rail-splitter. They never went to college, but nevertheless, like Agamemnon,[10] they were kings of men, and the world blesses their memory.

So it does; but the sophistry here is plain enough, although it is not always detected. Great genius and force of character undoubtedly make their own career. But because Walter Scott was dull at school, is a parent to see with joy that his son is a dunce? Because Lord Chatham[11] was of a towering conceit, must we infer that pompous vanity portends a comprehensive statesmanship that will fill the world with the splendor of its triumphs? Because Sir Robert Walpole[12] gambled and swore and boozed at Houghton, are we to suppose that gross sensuality and coarse contempt of human nature are the essential secrets of a power that defended liberty against tory intrigue and priestly politics? Was it because Benjamin Franklin was not college-bred that he drew the lightning from heaven and tore the scepter from the tyrant? Was it because Abraham Lincoln had little schooling that his great heart beat true to God and man, lifting him to free a race and die for his country? Because men naturally great have done great service in the world without advantages, does it follow that lack of advantage is the secret of success? Was Pericles[13] a less sagacious leader of the state, during forty years of Athenian glory, because he was thoroughly accomplished in every grace of learning? Or, swiftly passing from the Athenian agora[14] to the Boston town-meeting, behold Samuel Adams, tribune of New England against Old England—of America against Europe—of liberty against despotism. Was his power enfeebled, his fervor chilled, his patriotism relaxed, by his college education? No, no; they were strengthened, kindled, confirmed. Taking his Master's Degree one hundred and thirty-four years ago, thirty-three years before the Declaration of Independence, Samuel Adams, then twenty-one years old, declared in a Latin discourse —the first flashes of the fire that blazed afterward in Faneuil Hall and kindled America—that it is lawful to resist the supreme magistrate if the commonwealth cannot otherwise be preserved. In the very year that Jefferson was born, the college boy, Samuel Adams, on a Commencement day like this, on an academical platform like this on which we stand, struck the keynote of American independence, which still stirs the heart of man with its music.

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[8] Curtis probably refers to Tweed, a political "boss," the leader of what was known as the Tweed Ring, who was found guilty of robbing the city of New York of many millions of dollars, and was imprisoned in the Ludlow Street jail, New York City, where he finally died.

[9] The supposititious utterance of followers of James Buchanan, President, 1857-1861.

[10] Leader of the Greeks in the war against Troy.

[11] William Pitt the elder, Earl of Chatham, one of the most eminent English statesmen of the eighteenth century and a friend of the American colonies.

[12] An English statesman and Whig leader, 1676-1745, twice prime minister, who stood against the powerful Tory interests of the day and for sound finance and peace. His country seat was at Houghton.

[13] A Greek statesman, 495-429 B. C., leader of the democratic party.

[14] market place, forum

Or, within our own century, look at the great modern statesmen who have shaped the politics of the world. They were educated men; were they therefore visionary, pedantic, impracticable? Cavour,[15] whose monument is United Italy—one from the Alps to Tarentum, from the lagunes of Venice to the gulf of Salerno: Bismarck, who has raised the German empire from a name to a fact; Gladstone, today the incarnate heart and conscience of England: they are the perpetual refutation of the sneer that high education weakens men for practical affairs. Trained themselves, such men know the value of training. All countries, all ages, all men, are their teachers. The broader their education, the wider the horizon of their thought and observation; the more affluent their resources, the more humane their policy. Would Samuel Adams have been a truer popular leader had he been less an educated man? Would Walpole the less truly have served his country had he been, with all his capacities, a man whom England could have revered and loved? Could Gladstone so sway England with his serene eloquence, as the moon the tides, were he a gambling, swearing, boozing squire like Walpole? There is no sophistry more poisonous to the state, no folly more stupendous and demoralizing, than the notion that the purest character and the highest education are incompatible with the most commanding mastery of men and the most efficient administration of affairs.

Undoubtedly a practical and active interest in politics will lead you to party association and coöperation. Great public results—the repeal of the corn-laws[16] in England, the abolition of slavery in America—are due to that organization of effort and concentration of aim which arouse, instruct, and inspire the popular heart and will. This is the spring of party, and those who earnestly seek practical results instinctively turn to this agency of united action. But in this tendency, useful in the state as the fire upon the household hearth, lurks, as in that fire, the deadliest peril. Here is our republic—it is a ship with towering canvas spread, sweeping before the prosperous gale over a foaming and sparkling sea: it is a lightning train darting with awful speed along the edge of dizzy abysses and across bridges that quiver over unsounded gulfs. Because we are Americans, we have no peculiar charm, no magic spell, to stay the eternal laws. Our safety lies alone in cool self-possession, directing the forces of wind and wave and fire. If once the madness to which the excitement tends usurps control, the catastrophe is inevitable. And so deep is the conviction that sooner or later this madness must seize every republic, that the most plausible suspicion of the permanence of the American government is founded in the belief that party spirit cannot be restrained. It is indeed a master passion, but its control is the true conservatism of the republic and of happy human progress: and it is men made familiar by education with the history of its ghastly catastrophes, men with the proud courage of independence, who are to temper by lofty action, born of that knowledge, the ferocity of party spirit.

The first object of concerted political action is the highest welfare of the country. But the conditions of party association are such that the means are constantly and easily substituted for the end. The sophistry is subtle and seductive. Holding the ascendency of his party essential to the national welfare, the zealous partisan merges patriotism in party. He insists that not to sustain the party is to betray the country, and against all honest doubt and reasonable hesitation and reluctance, he vehemently urges that quibbles of conscience must be sacrificed to the public good; that wise and practical men will not be squeamish; that every soldier in the army cannot indulge his own whims; and that if the majority may justly prevail in determining the government, it must not be questioned in the control of a party.

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[15] Count Cavour brought about the unification of Italy; Bismarck united the German states; Gladstone was four times prime minister of England, and as a leading spirit in the House of Commons for over fifty years, carried many reform measures.

[16] The high import tax levied on grain, a tax especially burdensome to the poor, was practically abolished by the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846.

This spirit adds moral coercion to sophistry. It denounces as a traitor him who protests against party tyranny, and it makes unflinching adherence to what is called regular party action the condition of the gratification of honorable political ambition. Because a man who sympathizes with the party aims refuses to vote for a thief, this spirit scorns him as a rat and a renegade. Because he holds to principle and law against party expediency and dictation, he is proclaimed to have betrayed his country, justice and humanity. Because he tranquilly insists upon deciding for himself when he must dissent from his party, he is reviled as a popinjay and a visionary fool. Seeking with honest purpose only the welfare of his country, the hot air around him hums with the cry of "the grand old party," "the traditions of the party," "loyalty to the party," "future of the party," "servant of the party"; and he sees and hears the gorged and portly money-changers in the temple usurping the very divinity of the God. Young hearts! be not dismayed. If ever any one of you shall be the man so denounced, do not forget that your own individual convictions are the whip of small cords[17] which God has put into your hands to expel the blasphemers.

The same party spirit naturally denies the patriotism of its opponents. Identifying itself with the country, it regards all others as public enemies. This is substantially revolutionary politics. It is the condition of France, where, in its own words, the revolution is permanent. Instead of regarding the other party as legitimate opponents—in the English phrase, His Majesty's Opposition—lawfully seeking a different policy under the government, it decries that party as a conspiracy plotting the overthrow of the government itself. History is lurid with the wasting fires of this madness. We need not look to that of other lands. Our own is full of it. It is painful to turn to the opening years of the Union, and see how the great men whom we are taught to revere, and to whose fostering care the beginning of the republic was entrusted, fanned their hatred and suspicion of each other. Do not trust the flattering voices that whisper of a Golden Age behind us, and bemoan our own as a degenerate day. The castles of hope always shine along the horizon. Our fathers saw theirs where we are standing. We behold ours where our fathers stood. But pensive regret for the heroic past, like eager anticipation of the future, shows only that the vision of a loftier life forever allures the human soul. We think our fathers to have been wiser than we, and their day more enviable. But eighty years ago the Federalists abhorred their opponents as Jacobins, and thought Robespierre and Marat no worse than Washington's secretary of state.[18] Their opponents retorted that the Federalists were plotting to establish a monarchy by force of arms. The New England pulpit anathematized Tom Jefferson as an atheist and a satyr. Jefferson denounced John Jay[19] as a rogue, and the chief newspaper of the opposition, on the morning that Washington retired from the presidency, thanked God that the country was now rid of the man who was the source of all its misfortunes. There is no mire in which party spirit wallows today, with which our fathers were not befouled, and how little sincere the vituperation was, how shallow a fury, appears when Jefferson and Adams had retired from public life. Then they corresponded placidly and familiarly, each at last conscious of the other's fervent patriotism; and when they died, they were lamented in common by those who in their names had flown at each other's throats, as the patriarchal Castor and Pollux[20] of the pure age of our politics now fixed as a constellation of hope in our heaven.

The same brutal spirit showed itself at the time of Andrew Johnson's impeachment.[21] Impeachment is a proceeding to be instituted only for great public reasons, which should, presumptively, command universal support. To prostitute the power of impeachment to a mere party purpose, would readily lead to the reversal of the result of an election. But it was made a party measure. The party was to be whipped into its support: and when certain senators broke the party yoke upon their necks, and voted according to their convictions, as honorable men always will, whether the party whips like it or not, one of the whippers-in exclaimed of a patriotism, the struggle of obedience to which cost one senator at least, his life[22]—"If there is anything worse than the treachery, it is the cant which pretends that it is the result of conscientious conviction; the pretense of a conscience is quite unbearable." This was the very acridity of bigotry, which in other times and countries raised the cruel tribunal of the Inquisition, and burned opponents for the glory of God. The party madness that dictated these words, and the sympathy that approved them, was treason not alone to the country but to well-ordered human society. Murder may destroy great statesmen, but corruption makes great states impossible; and this was an attempt at the most insidious corruption. The man who attempts to terrify a senator of the United States to cast a dishonest vote, by stigmatizing him as a hypocrite and devoting him to party hatred, is only a more plausible rascal than his opponent who gives Pat O'Flanagan a fraudulent naturalization paper or buys his vote with a dollar or a glass of whiskey. Whatever the offences of the president may have been, they were as nothing when compared with the party spirit which declared that it was tired of the intolerable cant of honesty. So the sneering cavalier was tired of the cant of the Puritan conscience, but the conscience of which plumed Injustice and coroneted Privilege were tired, has been for three centuries the invincible body-guard of civil and religious liberty.

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[17] *John* ii. 15.

[18] The Federalists considered their opponents as bad as the very radical revolutionists of France, the Jacobins, and placed Thomas Jefferson in the same category with Robespierre and Marat, the leaders of the Jacobins.

[19] The prominent New York Federalist and statesman, and first chief justice of the United States Supreme Court.

[20] Twin brothers in classic mythology, for whom the constellation Gemini, the Twins, is named.

[21] Andrew Johnson, president 1865-1869, although elected as a Republican, vetoed so many of the measures which the Republican Congress had passed, and so strongly opposed Congress, that he was impeached, though finally acquitted.

Gentlemen, how dire a calamity the same party spirit was preparing for the country within a few months, we can now perceive with amazement and with hearty thanksgiving for a great deliverance. The ordeal of last winter[23] was the severest strain ever yet applied to republican institutions. It was a mortal strain along the very fiber of our system. It was not a collision of sections, nor a conflict of principles of civilization. It was a supreme and triumphant test of American patriotism. Greater than the declaration of independence by colonies hopelessly alienated from the crown and already in arms; greater than emancipation, as a military expedient, amid the throes of civil war, was the peaceful and reasonable consent of two vast parties—in a crisis plainly foreseen and criminally neglected—a crisis in which each party asserted its solution to be indisputable—to devise a lawful settlement of the tremendous contest, a settlement which, through furious storms of disappointment and rage, has been religiously respected. We are told that our politics are mean—that already, in its hundredth year, the decadence of the American republic appears and the hope of the world is clouded. But tell me, scholars, in what high hour of Greece, when, as De Witt Clinton declared, "the herb-woman of Athens could criticize the phraseology of Demosthenes, and the meanest artisan could pronounce judgment on the works of Apelles and Phidias,"[24] or at what proud epoch of imperial Rome or millennial moment of the fierce Italian republics, was ever so momentous a party difference so wisely, so peacefully, so humanely, composed? Had the sophistry of party prevailed, had each side resolved that not to insist upon its own claim that every hazard was what the mad party spirit of each side declared it to be, a pusillanimous surrender: had the spirit of Marius mastered one party and that of Sylla[25] the other, this waving valley of the Mohawk would not today murmur with the music of industry, and these tranquil voices of scholars blending with its happy harvest-song; it would have smoked and roared with fraternal war, and this shuddering river would have run red through desolated meadows and by burning homes.

It is because these consequences are familiar to the knowledge of educated and thoughtful men that such men are constantly to assuage this party fire and to take care that party is always subordinated to patriotism. Perfect party discipline is the most dangerous weapon of party spirit, for it is the abdication of the individual judgment: it is the application to political parties of the Jesuit principle of implicit obedience.

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[22] Possibly Senator Grimes of Iowa, who two days after he had read a long paper in support of his vote upholding Johnson, suffered in the Senate Chamber a stroke of paralysis, which later resulted in his death. His vote brought upon him a furor of indignation and abuse.

[23] The presidential election of 1876 was bitterly contested, both Hayes, the Republican candidate, and Tilden, the Democratic candidate, claiming to be elected. It was decided by a commission consisting of five justices of the supreme court of the United States five senators, and five representatives. The strong feeling in favor of each claimant had created a crisis in public affairs which to many seemed to prelude a civil war.

[24] Apelles was the most famous painter and Phidias the greatest sculptor of ancient Greece.

[25] Marius and Sylla (Sulla) were Roman generals of the first century B. C. whose rivalry caused a civil war.

It is for you to help break this withering spell. It is for you to assert the independence and the dignity of the individual citizen, and to prove that party was made for the voter, not the voter for party. When you are angrily told that if you erect your personal whim against the regular party behest, you make representative government impossible by refusing to accept its conditions, hold fast by your own conscience and let the party go. There is not an American merchant who would send a ship to sea under the command of Captain Kidd, however skillful a sailor he might be. Why should he vote to send Captain Kidd to the legislature or to put him in command of the ship of state because his party directs? The party which today nominates Captain Kidd, will tomorrow nominate Judas Iscariot, and tomorrow, as today, party spirit will spurn you as a traitor for refusing to sell your master. "I tell you," said an ardent and well-meaning partisan, speaking of a closely contested election in another state, "I tell you it is a nasty state, and I hope we have done nasty work enough to carry it." But if your state has been carried by nasty means this year, success will require nastier next year, and the nastiest means will always carry it. The party may win, but the state will have been lost, for there are successes which are failures. When a man is sitting upon the bough of a tree and diligently sawing it off between himself and the trunk, he may succeed, but his success will break his neck.

The remedy for the constant excess of party spirit lies, and lies alone, in the courageous independence of the individual citizen. The only way, for instance, to procure the party nomination of good men, is for every self-respecting voter to refuse to vote for bad men. In the medieval theology the devils feared nothing so much as the drop of holy water and the sign of the cross, by which they were exorcised. The evil spirits of party fear nothing so much as bolting and scratching. *In hoc signo vinces.*[26] If a farmer would reap a good crop, he scratches the weeds out of his field. If we would have good men upon the ticket, we must scratch bad men off. If the scratching breaks down the party, let it break: for the success of the party by such means would break down the country. The evil spirits must be taught by means that they can understand. "Them fellers," said the captain of a canal-boat of his men—"them fellers never think you mean a thing until you kick 'em. They feel that, and understand."

It is especially necessary for us to perceive the vital relation of individual courage and character to the common welfare because ours is a government of public opinion, and public opinion is but the aggregate of individual thought. We have the awful responsibility as a community of doing what we choose; and it is of the last importance that we choose to do what is wise and right. In the early days of the anti-slavery agitation, a meeting was called at Faneuil Hall, in Boston, which a good-natured mob of soldiers was hired to suppress. They took possession of the floor and danced breakdowns and shouted choruses and refused to hear any of the orators upon the platform. The most eloquent pleaded with them in vain. They were urged by the memories of the Cradle of Liberty, for the honor of Massachusetts, for their own honor as Boston boys, to respect liberty of speech. But they still laughed and sang and danced, and were proof against every appeal. At last a man suddenly arose from among themselves, and began to speak. Struck by his tone and quaint appearance, and with the thought that he might be one of themselves, the mob became suddenly still. "Well, fellow-citizens," he said, "I wouldn't be quiet if I didn't want to." The words were greeted with a roar of delight from the mob, which supposed it had found its champion, and the applause was unceasing for five minutes, during which the strange orator tranquilly awaited his chance to continue. The wish to hear more hushed the tumult, and when the hall was still he resumed: "No, I certainly wouldn't stop if I hadn't a mind to; but then, if I were you, I *would* have a mind to!" The oddity of the remark and the earnestness of the tone, held the crowd silent, and the speaker continued: "Not because this is Faneuil Hall, nor for the honor of Massachusetts, nor because you are Boston boys, but because you are men and because honorable and generous men always love fair play." The mob was conquered. Free speech and fair play were secured. Public opinion can do what it has a mind to in this country. If it be debased and demoralized, it is the most odious of tyrants. It is Nero and Caligula[27] multiplied by millions. Can there then be a more stringent public duty for every man—and the greater the intelligence the greater the duty—than to take care, by all the influence he can command, that the country, the majority, public opinion, shall have a mind to do only what is just and pure, and humane?

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[26] With this sign you conquer.

[27] Two of the worst Roman emperors.

Gentlemen, leaving this college to take your part in the discharge of the duties of American citizenship, every sign encourages and inspires. The year that is now ending, the year that opens the second century of our history, has furnished the supreme proof that in a country of rigorous party division the purest patriotism exists. That and that only is the pledge of a prosperous future. No mere party fervor, or party fidelity, or party discipline, could fully restore a country torn and distracted by the fierce debate of a century and the convulsions of civil war; nothing less than a patriotism all-embracing as the summer air could heal a wound so wide. I know,—no man better,—how hard it is for earnest men to separate their country from their party, or their religion from their sect. But nevertheless the welfare of the country is dearer than the mere victory of party, as truth is more precious than the interest of any sect. You will hear this patriotism scorned as an impracticable theory, as the dream of a cloister, as the whim of a fool. But such was the folly of the Spartan Leonidas, staying with his three hundred the Persian horde[28] and teaching Greece the self-reliance that saved her. Such was the folly of the Swiss Arnold von Winkelried, gathering into his own breast the host of Austrian spears, making his dead body the bridge of victory for his countrymen.[29] Such was the folly of the American Nathan Hale, gladly risking the seeming disgrace of his name, and grieving that he had but one life to give for his country. Such are the beacon-lights of a pure patriotism that burn forever in men's memories and answer each other through the illuminated ages. And of the same grandeur, in less heroic and poetic form, was the patriotism of Sir Robert Peel in recent history. He was the leader of a great party and the prime minister of England. The character and necessity of party were as plain to him as to any man. But when he saw that the national welfare demanded the repeal of the corn-laws which he had always supported, he did not quail. Amply avowing the error of a life and the duty of avowing it—foreseeing the probable overthrow of his party and the bitter execration that must fall upon him, he tranquilly did his duty. With the eyes of England fixed upon him in mingled amazement, admiration and indignation, he rose in the House of Commons to perform as great a service as any English statesman ever performed for his country, and in closing his last speech in favor of the repeal, describing the consequences that its mere prospect had produced, he loftily exclaimed: "Where there was dissatisfaction I see contentment; where there was turbulence, I see there is peace; where there was disloyalty, I see there is loyalty. I see a disposition to confide in you, and not to agitate questions that are the foundations of your institutions." When all was over, when he had left office, when his party was out of power, and the fury of party execration against him was spent, his position was greater and nobler than it had ever been. Cobden[30] said of him, "Sir Robert Peel has lost office, but he has gained a country"; and Lord Dalling said of him, what may truly be said of Washington: "Above all parties, himself a party, he had trained his own mind into a disinterested sympathy with the intelligence of his country."

A public spirit so lofty is not confined to other ages and lands. You are conscious of its stirrings in your souls. It calls you to courageous service, and I am here to bid you obey the call. Such patriotism may be ours. Let it be your parting vow that it shall be yours. Bolingbroke[31] described a patriot king in England; I can imagine a patriot president in America. I can see him indeed the choice of a party, and called to administer the government when sectional jealousy is fiercest and party passion most inflamed. I can imagine him seeing clearly what justice and humanity, the national law and the national welfare require him to do, and resolved to do it. I can imagine him patiently enduring not only the mad cry of party hate, the taunt of "recreant" and "traitor," of "renegade" and "coward," but what is harder to bear, the amazement, the doubt, the grief, the denunciation, of those as sincerely devoted as he to the common welfare. I can imagine him pushing firmly on, trusting the heart, the intelligence, the conscience of his countrymen, healing angry wounds, correcting misunderstandings, planting justice on surer foundations, and, whether his party rise or fall, lifting his country heavenward to a more perfect union, prosperity, and peace. This is the spirit of a patriotism that girds the commonwealth with the resistless splendor of the moral law—the invulnerable panoply of States, the celestial secret of a great nation and a happy people.

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[28] At the pass of Thermopylae in 480 B. C.

[29] According to tradition, he in this way made an opening in the ranks of the Austrians, at Sempach in 1386, and thus gave the Swiss the victory which meant their independence.

[30] Richard Cobden the eminent English statesman and orator, 1804-1865 had convinced Peel, his political opponent, that the corn laws must be repealed.

[31] Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, 1678-1751, an English statesman and political writer. He wrote *The Idea of a Patriot King* in 1749.

1877 1878

ALBERT PIKE

Born, Boston, 1809, died, Washington, 1891. He studied at Harvard, taught school, emigrated to Arkansas, edited and published the *Arkansas Advocate,* and practiced law. He served in the Mexican war as a captain of cavalry, and during the Civil War was a brigadier general in the Confederate service. His *Hymns to the Gods* was published in "Blackwoods" in 1839, and *Poems* appeared in 1873 and 1881.

DIXIE

Southrons, hear your country call you!
Up, lest worse than death befall you!
  To arms! To arms! To arms, in Dixie!
Lo! all the beacon-fires are lighted,—
Let all hearts be now united!
  To arms! To arms! To arms, in Dixie!
  Advance the flag of Dixie!
    Hurrah! Hurrah!
For Dixie's land we take our stand,
  And live or die for Dixie!
    To arms! To arms!
  And conquer peace for Dixie!
    To arms! To arms!
  And conquer peace for Dixie!

Hear the Northern thunders mutter,
Northern flags in South winds flutter:
Send them back your fierce defiance!
Stamp upon the accursed alliance!

Fear no danger! Shun no labor!
Lift up rifle, pike, and saber!
Shoulder pressing close to shoulder,
Let the odds make each heart bolder!

How the South's great heart rejoices
At your cannons' ringing voices,
For faith betrayed, and pledges broken,
Wrongs inflicted, insults spoken!

Strong as lions, swift as eagles,
Back to their kennels hunt these beagles!
Cut the unequal bonds asunder:
Let them hence each other plunder!

Swear upon your country's altar
Never to submit or falter,
Till the spoilers are defeated,
Till the Lord's work is completed.

Halt not till our Federation
Secures among earth's powers its station:
Then at peace, and crowned with glory,
Hear your children tell the story!

If the loved ones weep in sadness,
Victory soon shall bring them gladness,—
    To arms!
Exultant pride soon banish sorrow,
Smiles chase tears away tomorrow.
  To arms! To arms! To arms, in Dixie!
  Advance the flag of Dixie!
    Hurrah! hurrah!
For Dixie's land we take our stand,
  And live or die for Dixie!
    To arms! To arms!
  And conquer peace for Dixie!
    To arms! To arms!
  And conquer peace for Dixie!

1861 1861?

THEODORE O'HARA

Born, Danville, Kentucky, 1820, died, Guerrytown, Alabama, 1867. He was educated at St. Joseph College, Bardstown, Kentucky, and afterwards studied and practiced law. He was appointed captain in the United States army, served in the Mexican War, and was brevetted colonel. During the Civil War he served as colonel in the Confederate army.

THE BIVOUAC OF THE DEAD[1]

The muffled drum's sad roll has beat
  The soldier's last tattoo;[2]
No more on life's parade shall meet
  That brave and fallen few.
On Fame's eternal camping-ground
  Their silent tents are spread,
And Glory guards, with solemn round,
  The bivouac of the dead.

No rumor of the foe's advance
  Now swells upon the wind;
No troubled thought at midnight haunts
  Of loved ones left behind;
No vision of the morrow's strife
  The warrior's dream alarms;
No braying horn nor screaming fife
  At dawn shall call to arms.

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[1] This poem was written in memory of Kentucky comrades killed in the Mexican War and buried in Frankfort, Ky.

[2] A drum call to repair to quarters for the night; "taps" is "lights out."

Their shivered swords are red with rust;
Their plumed heads are bowed;
Their haughty banner, trailed in dust,
Is now their martial shroud.
And plenteous funeral tears have washed
The red stains from each brow,
And the proud forms, by battle gashed,
Are free from anguish now.

The neighing troop, the flashing blade,
The bugle's stirring blast,
The charge, the dreadful cannonade,
The din and shout, are past;
Nor war's wild note nor glory's peal
Shall thrill with fierce delight
Those breasts that never more may feel
The rapture of the fight.

Like the fierce northern hurricane
That sweeps this great plateau,
Flushed with triumph yet to gain,
Came down the serried foe.[3]
Who heard the thunder of the fray
Break o'er the field beneath,
Knew well the watchword of that day
Was "Victory or Death."

Long had the doubtful conflict raged
O'er all that stricken plain,
For never fiercer fight had waged
The vengeful blood of Spain;
And still the storm of battle blew,
Still swelled the gory tide;
Not long, our stout old chieftain[4] knew,
Such odds his strength could bide.

'Twas in that hour his stern command
Called to a martyr's grave
The flower of his beloved land
The nation's flag to save.
By rivers of their fathers' gore
His first-born laurels grew,
And well he deemed the sons would pour
Their lives for glory too.

Full many a norther's breath has swept
O'er Angostura's plain[5]—
And long the pitying sky has wept
Above its moldered slain.
The raven's scream, or eagle's flight,
Or shepherd's pensive lay,
Alone awakes each sullen height
That frowned o'er that dread fray.

Sons of the Dark and Bloody Ground,[6]
Ye must not slumber there,
Where stranger steps and tongues resound
Along the heedless air.
Your own proud land's heroic soil
Shall be your fitter grave;
She claims from War his richest spoil—
The ashes of her brave.

Thus 'neath their parent turf they rest,
Far from the gory field;
Borne to a Spartan mother's breast
On many a bloody shield;
The sunlight of their native sky
Smiles sadly on them here,
And kindred eyes and hearts watch by
The heroes' sepulcher.

Rest on, embalmed and sainted dead,
Dear as the blood ye gave;
No impious footstep here shall tread
The herbage of your grave;
Nor shall your glory be forgot
While Fame her record keeps,
Or Honor points the hallowed spot
Where Valor proudly sleeps.

Yon marble minstrel's voiceless stone
In deathless song shall tell,
When many a vanished age hath flown,
The story how ye fell;
Nor wreck, nor change, nor winter's blight,
Nor Time's remorseless doom,
Shall dim one ray of glory's light
That gilds your glorious tomb.

1847

MARGARET JUNKIN PRESTON

Born, Milton, Pennsylvania, 1820, died, Baltimore, 1897. She was the daughter of a Presbyterian clergyman, was privately educated, and married Colonel J. T. L. Preston of the Virginia Military Institute. She wrote *Silverwood* (novel), 1856; *Beechenbrook* (verse), 1865; *Old Songs and New*, 1870; *Colonial Ballads*, 1887.

THE SHADE OF THE TREES

What are the thoughts that are stirring his breast?
What is the mystical vision he sees?
"Let us pass over the river and rest
Under the shade of the trees."[1]

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[3] The Mexican forces numbered over twenty thousand.

[4] General Zachary Taylor.

[5] A ridge or tableland near Buena Vista where on February 22-23, 1847, General Taylor won a great victory.

[6] The meaning of the Indian word Kentucky.

[1] These were the last words of General Thomas Jonathan Jackson, better known as Stonewall Jackson, who was mortally wounded at the battle of Chancellorsville, May, 1863.

Has he grown sick of his toils and his tasks?
Sighs the worn spirit for respite or ease?
Is it a moment's cool halt that he asks
Under the shade of the trees?

Is it the gurgle of waters whose flow
Ofttime has come to him borne on the breeze,
Memory listens to, lapsing so low,
Under the shade of the trees?

Nay—though the rasp of the flesh was so sore,
Faith, that had yearnings far keener than these,
Saw the soft sheen of the Thitherward Shore,
Under the shade of the trees;—

Caught the high psalms of ecstatic delight,
Heard the harps harping like soundings of seas,
Watched earth's assoiled ones walking in white
Under the shade of the trees.

O, was it strange he should pine for release,
Touched to the soul with such transports as these,
He who so needed the balsam of peace,
Under the shade of the trees?

Yes, it was noblest for him—it was best
(Questioning naught of our Father's decrees)
There to pass over the river and rest
Under the shade of the trees!

1863

FRANCIS ORRAY TICKNOR

Born, Baldwin County, Georgia, 1822, died near Columbus, Georgia, 1874. He was educated in Massachusetts, studied medicine in New York and Philadelphia, and became a practicing physician at Columbus, Georgia. His *Poems* were published in 1879.

LITTLE GIFFEN[1]

Out of the focal and foremost fire,
Out of the hospital walls as dire,
Smitten of grapeshot and gangrene,
Eighteenth battle and he sixteen—
Specter such as you seldom see,
Little Giffen of Tennessee.

"Take him and welcome," the surgeon said;
"Not the doctor can help the dead!"
So we took him and brought him where
The balm was sweet in our summer air;
And we laid him down on a wholesome bed;
Utter Lazarus, heel to head!

And we watched the war with abated breath,
Skeleton boy against skeleton death!
Months of torture, how many such!
Weary weeks of the stick and crutch,—
And still a glint in the steel-blue eye
Told of a spirit that wouldn't die,

And didn't! Nay! more! in death's despite
The crippled skeleton learned to write—
"Dear mother!" at first, of course, and then
"Dear Captain!" inquiring about the men.
Captain's answer: "Of eighty and five,
Giffen and I are left alive."

"Johnston[2] pressed at the front," they say;—
Little Giffen was up and away!
A tear, his first, as he bade good-by,
Dimmed the glint of his steel-blue eye.
"I'll write, if spared!" There was news of fight,
But none of Giffen—he did not write!

I sometimes fancy that were I King
Of the courtly Knights of Arthur's ring,
With the voice of the minstrel in mine ear
And the tender legend that trembles here,
I'd give the best on his bended knee—
The whitest soul of my chivalry—
For Little Giffen of Tennessee.

THE VIRGINIANS OF THE VALLEY

The Knightliest of the Knightly race,
That since the days of old,
Have kept the lamp of chivalry
Alive in hearts of gold.
The kindliest of the kindly band
That, rarely hating ease,
Yet rode with Raleigh round the land,
With Smith around the seas.

Who climbed the blue embattled hills
Against uncounted foes,
And planted there, in valleys fair,
The Lily and the Rose!
Whose fragrance lives in many lands,
Whose beauty stars the earth;
And lights the hearths of happy homes
With loveliness and worth!

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[1] *Little Giffen* is "A true story of a boy whom Dr. Ticknor nursed back to life at Torch Hill, Georgia." (Quoted from Riverside Classics, *"Southern Poems,"* Houghton, Mifflin Company.)

[2] General Joseph E. Johnston of Virginia.

We thought they slept! the sons who kept
The names of noble sires,
And slumbered, while the darkness crept
Around their vigil fires!
But aye! the "Golden Horseshoe" Knights
Their Old Dominion keep,
Whose foes have found enchanted ground
But not a knight asleep.

JOHN R. THOMPSON

Born, Richmond, Virginia, 1823, died, New York City, 1873. He graduated at the University of Virginia, 1844, studied law, but turned to literature and was editor of *The Southern Literary Messenger*, 1847-1860. In 1864 he went to London, where for some time he contributed to *Blackwood's Magazine*. Afterwards he was literary editor of the *New York Evening Post* and a frequent contributor to American literary magazines.

MUSIC IN CAMP

Two armies covered hill and plain,
Where Rappahannock's waters
Ran deeply crimsoned with the stain
Of battle's recent slaughters.[1]

The summer clouds lay pitched like tents
In meads of heavenly azure;
And each dread gun of the elements
Slept in its hid embrasure.

The breeze so softly blew it made
No forest leaf to quiver,
And the smoke of the random cannonade
Rolled slowly from the river.

And now, where circling hills looked down
With cannon grimly planted,
O'er listless camp and silent town
The golden sunset slanted.

When on the fervid air there came
A strain, now rich, now tender;
The music seemed itself aflame
With day's departing splendor.

A Federal band, which, eve and morn,
Played measures brave and nimble,
Had just struck up, with flute and horn
And lively clash of cymbal.

Down flocked the soldiers to the banks,
Till, margined by its pebbles,
One wooded shore was blue with "Yanks,"
And one was gray with "Rebels."

Then all was still, and then the band,
With movement light and tricksy,
Made stream and forest, hill and strand,
Reverberate with "Dixie."

The conscious stream with burnished glow
Went proudly o'er its pebbles,
But thrilled throughout its deepest flow
With yelling of the Rebels.

Again a pause, and then again
The trumpets pealed sonorous,
And "Yankee Doodle" was the strain
To which the shore gave chorus.

The laughing ripple shoreward flew,
To kiss the shining pebbles;
Loud shrieked the swarming Boys in Blue
Defiance to the Rebels.

And yet once more the bugle sang
Above the stormy riot;
No shout upon the evening rang—
There reigned a holy quiet.

The sad, slow stream its noiseless flood
Poured over the glistening pebbles;
All silent now the Yankees stood,
And silent stood the Rebels.

No unresponsive soul had heard
That plaintive note's appealing,
So deeply "Home, Sweet Home" had stirred
The hidden founts of feeling.

Or Blue, or Gray, the soldier sees,
As by the wand of fairy,
The cottage 'neath the live-oak trees,
The cabin by the prairie.

Or cold, or warm, his native skies
Bend in their beauty o'er him;
Seen through the tear mist in his eyes,
His loved ones stand before him.

As fades the iris after rain
In April's tearful weather,
The vision vanished, as the strain
And daylight died together.

But Memory, waked by Music's art,
Expressed in simplest numbers,
Subdued the sternest Yankee's heart,
Made light the Rebel's slumbers.

And fair the form of Music shines,
That bright celestial creature,
Who still, 'mid war's embattled lines,
Gave this one touch of Nature.

1863

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[1] After the battle of Fredericksburg on the Rappahannock River, one of the severest battles of the Civil War, December 13, 1862, the Union and Confederate armies remained all winter encamped on the opposite banks of the river.

CARCASSONNE[1]

"I'm growing old, I've sixty years;
I've labored all my life in vain:
In all that time of hopes and fears
I've failed my dearest wish to gain.
I see full well that here below
Bliss unalloyed there is for none.
My prayer will ne'er fulfilment know.
I never have seen Carcassonne,
I never have seen Carcassonne!

"You see the city from the hill,
It lies beyond the mountains blue,
And yet to reach it one must still
Five long and weary leagues pursue,
And to return as many more!
Ah! had the vintage plenteous grown!
The grape withheld its yellow store!
I shall not look on Carcassonne,
I shall not look on Carcassonne!

"They tell me every day is there
Not more or less than Sunday gay:
In shining robes and garments fair
The people walk upon their way.
One gazes there on castle walls
As grand as those of Babylon,
A bishop and two generals!
I do not know fair Carcassonne,
I do not know fair Carcassonne!

"The vicar's right; he says that we
Are ever wayward, weak and blind,
He tells us in his homily
Ambition ruins all mankind;
Yet could I there two days have spent
While still the autumn sweetly shone,
Ah me! I might have died content
When I had looked on Carcassonne,
When I had looked on Carcassonne!

"Thy pardon, Father, I beseech,
In this my prayer if I offend;
One something sees beyond his reach
From childhood to his journey's end.
My wife, our little boy Aignon,
Have traveled even to Narbonne;
My grandchild has seen Perpignon,
And I have not seen Carcassonne,
And I have not seen Carcassonne!"

So crooned one day, close by Limoux,
A peasant double-bent with age;
"Rise up, my friend," said I; "with you
I'll go upon this pilgrimage."
We left next morning his abode,
But (Heaven forgive him) half-way on,
The old man died upon the road;
He never gazed on Carcassonne:
Each mortal has his Carcassonne!

THADDEUS OLIVER

Born, Jeffersonville, Georgia, 1826, died, Charleston, South Carolina, 1864. He was a lawyer by profession, served in the Confederate army, and died of a wound received in battle. He was the author of several pleasing lyrics, and is supposed on good reasons to have written this poem, though there are other claimants to the authorship.

ALL QUIET ALONG THE POTOMAC TONIGHT

"All quiet along the Potomac," they say,
"Except now and then a stray picket
Is shot, as he walks on his beat to and fro,
By a rifleman hid in the thicket.
'Tis nothing—a private or two now and then
Will not count in the news of the battle;
Not an officer lost—only one of the men,
Moaning out, all alone, the death-rattle."

All quiet along the Potomac tonight,
Where the soldiers lie peacefully dreaming;
Their tents in the rays of the clear autumn moon,
Or the light of the watch-fires, are gleaming.
A tremulous sigh as the gentle night-wind
Through the forest-leaves softly is creeping;
While stars up above, with their glittering eyes,
Keep guard, for the army is sleeping.

There's only the sound of the lone sentry's tread,
As he tramps from the rock to the fountain,
And thinks of the two in the low trundle-bed
Far away in the cot on the mountain.
His musket falls slack; his face, dark and grim,
Grows gentle with memories tender,
As he mutters a prayer for the children asleep,
For their mother—may Heaven defend her!

---

[1] A translation of the famous poem by Gustav Nadaud, 1820-1893, the French song writer. Carcassonne is an ancient town in France first occupied by the Romans and later by the West Goths. Some of its walls and towers are of the fifth century.

The moon seems to shine just as brightly as then,
That night, when the love yet unspoken
Leaped up to his lips—when low-murmured vows
Were pledged to be ever unbroken.
Then drawing his sleeve roughly over his eyes,
He dashes off tears that are welling,
And gathers his gun closer up to its place
As if to keep down the heart-swelling.

He passes the fountain, the blasted pine tree,
The footstep is lagging and weary;
Yet onward he goes, through the broad belt of light,
Toward the shades of the forest so dreary.
Hark! was it the night-wind that rustled the leaves?
Was it moonlight so wondrously flashing?
It looked like a rifle. . . "Ha! Mary, good-bye!"
The red life-blood is ebbing and plashing.

All quiet along the Potomac tonight,
No sound save the rush of the river;
While soft falls the dew on the face of the dead—
The picket's off duty forever.

1861

JAMES BARRON HOPE

Born, Norfolk, Virginia, 1827, died there, 1887. He was educated at William and Mary College, and was a frequent contributor to *The Southern Literary Messenger*. During the Civil War he served as captain in the Confederate army. Afterwards he engaged in education and in newspaper work at Norfolk. Among his books are *Elegiac Ode and Other Poems*, 1875; *Under the Empire*, 1878.

OUR ANGLO-SAXON TONGUE

Good is the Saxon speech! clear, short, and strong,
Its clean-cut words, fit both for prayer and song;
Good is this tongue for all the needs of life;
Good for sweet words with friend, or child, or wife.
Seax—short sword—and like a sword its sway
Hews out a path 'mid all the forms of speech,
For in itself it hath the power to teach
Itself, while many tongues slow fade away.

'Tis good for laws; for vows of youth and maid;
Good for the preacher; or shrewd folk in trade;
Good for sea-calls when loud the rush of spray;
Good for war-cries where men meet hilt to hilt,
And man's best blood like new-trod wine is spilt,—
Good for all times, and good for what thou wilt!

DREAMERS

Fools laugh at dreamers, and the dreamers smile
In answer, if they any answer make:
They know that Saxon Alfred could not bake
The oaten cakes, but that he snatched his Isle
Back from the fierce and bloody-handed Dane.

And so, they leave the plodders to their gains—
Quit money-changing for the student's lamp,
And tune the harp to gain thereby some camp,
Where what they learn is worth a kingdom's crown;
They fashion bows and arrows to bring down
The mighty truths which sail the upper air;
To them the facts which make the fools despair
Become familiar, and a thousand things
Tell them the secrets they refuse to kings.

UNDER ONE BLANKET

The sun went down in flame and smoke,
The cold night passed without alarms,
And when the bitter morning broke
Our men stood to their arms.

But not a foe in front was found
After the long and stubborn fight.
The enemy had left the ground
Where we had lain that night.

In hollows where the sun was lost
Unthawed still lay the shining snow,
And on the rugged ground the frost
In slender spears did grow.

Close to us, where our final rush
Was made at closing in of day,
We saw, amid an awful hush,
The rigid shapes of clay:

Things, which but yesterday had life,
And answered to the trumpet's call,
Remained as victims of the strife,
Clods of the Valley all!

Then, the grim detail marched away
A grave from the hard soil to wrench
Wherein should sleep the Blue and Gray
All in a ghastly trench!

A thicket of young pines arose,
Midway upon that frosty ground;
A shelter from the winds and snows,
And by its edge I found

Two stiffened forms, where they had died,
As sculptured marble white and cold,
Lying together side by side
Beneath one blanket's fold.

My heart already touched and sad
The blanket down I gently drew
And saw a sturdy form, well clad
From head to heel in Blue.

Beside him, gaunt from a many a fast,
A pale and boyish "rebel" lay,
Free of all pangs of life, at last,
In tattered suit of Gray.

There side by side those soldiers slept
Each for the cause that he thought good,
And bowing down my head I wept
Through human brotherhood.

Oh, sirs! it was a piteous thing
To see how they had vainly tried
With strips of shirts, and bits of string
To stay life's ebbing tide!

The story told itself aright;
(Print scarce were plainer to the eye)
How they together in the night
Had laid them down to die.

The story told itself, I say,
How smitten by their wounds and cold
They'd nestled close, the Blue and Gray,
Beneath one blanket's fold.

All their poor surgery could do
They did to stop their wounds so deep,
Until at last the Gray and Blue
Like comrades fell asleep.

We dug for them a generous grave,
Under that somber thicket's lee,
And there we laid the sleeping brave
To wait God's reveillé.

That grave by many a tear was graced
From ragged heroes ranged around
As in one blanket they were placed
In consecrated ground.

Aye! consecrated, without flaw,
Because upon that bloody sod,
My soul uplifted stood and saw
Where Christ had lately trod!

HENRY TIMROD

Born, Charleston, South Carolina, 1829, died Columbia, South Carolina, 1867. Timrod's father was the author of a volume of verse. The son was for a while in the University of Georgia and later was a contributor to *Russell's Magazine* and *The Southern Literary Messenger.* He was engaged in journalism as correspondent and editor of South Carolina newspapers during the Civil War, and suffered great loss by its ravages. His poems were published in 1859, and again in 1873, edited by his friend Hayne.

I KNOW NOT WHY, BUT ALL THIS WEARY DAY

I know not why, but all this weary day,
Suggested by no definite grief or pain,
Sad fancies have been flitting through my brain;
Now it has been a vessel losing way,
Rounding a stormy headland; now a gray
Dull waste of clouds above a wintry main;
And then, a banner, drooping in the rain,
And meadows beaten into bloody clay.
Strolling at random with this shadowy woe
At heart, I chanced to wander hither! Lo!
A league of desolate marsh-land, with its lush,
Hot grasses in a noisome, tide-left bed,
And faint, warm airs that rustle in the hush,
Like whispers round the body of the dead.

MOST MEN KNOW LOVE BUT AS A PART OF LIFE

Most men know love but as a part of life;
They hide it in some corner of the breast,
Even from themselves; and only when they rest
In the brief pauses of that daily strife,
Wherewith the world might else be not so rife,
They draw it forth (as one draws forth a toy

To soothe some ardent, kiss-exacting boy)
And hold it up to sister, child, or wife.
Ah me! why may not love and life be one?
Why walk we thus alone, when by our side,
Love, like a visible God, might be our guide?
How would the marts grow noble! and the street,
Worn like a dungeon floor by weary feet,
Seem then a golden court-way of the Sun!

1859

CHARLESTON[1]

Calm as that second summer which precedes
The first fall of the snow,
In the broad sunlight of heroic deeds,
The city bides the foe.

As yet, behind their ramparts, stern and proud,
Her bolted thunders sleep,—
Dark Sumter, like a battlemented cloud,
Looms o'er the solemn deep.

No Calpe[2] frowns from lofty cliff or scar
To guard the holy strand;
But Moultrie holds in leash her dogs of war
Above the level sand.

And down the dunes a thousand guns lie couched,
Unseen, beside the flood,—
Like tigers in some Orient jungle crouched,
That wait and watch for blood.

Meanwhile, through streets still echoing with trade,
Walk grave and thoughtful men,
Whose hands may one day wield the patriot's blade,
As lightly as the pen.

And maidens, with such eyes as would grow dim
Over a bleeding hound,
Seem each one to have caught the strength of him
Whose sword she sadly bound.

Thus girt without and garrisoned at home,
Day patient following day,
Old Charleston looks from roof and spire and dome,
Across her tranquil bay.

Ships, through a hundred foes, from Saxon[3] lands
And spicy Indian ports,
Bring Saxon steel and iron to her hands,
And summer to her courts.

But still, along yon dim Atlantic line,
The only hostile smoke
Creeps like a harmless mist above the brine,
From some frail floating oak.

Shall the spring dawn, and she, still clad in smiles,
And with an unscathed brow,
Rest in the strong arms of her palm-crowned isles,
As fair and free as now?

We know not; in the temple of the Fates
God has inscribed her doom;
And, all untroubled in her faith, she waits
The triumph or the tomb.

1861-62?

1862

SPRING

Spring, with that nameless pathos in the air
Which dwells with all things fair,
Spring, with her golden suns and silver rain,
Is with us once again.

Out in the lonely woods the jasmine burns
Its fragrant lamps, and turns
Into a royal court with green festoons
The banks of dark lagoons.

In the deep heart of every forest tree
The blood is all aglee,
And there's a look about the leafless bowers
As if they dreamed of flowers.

Yet still on every side we trace the hand
Of Winter in the land,
Save where the maple reddens on the lawn,
Flushed by the season's dawn;

Or where, like those strange semblances we find
That age to childhood bind,
The elm puts on, as if in Nature's scorn,
The brown of autumn corn.

---

[1] Timrod, "the laureate of the Confederacy," here voices the war feeling so strong in Charleston, where the first engagement of the Civil War took place at Fort Sumter, April, 1861. Fort Moultrie as well as Fort Sumter was when he wrote then in the hands of the Confederates.

[2] The ancient name for the rock of Gibraltar.

[3] British supplies came to the south in English ships.

As yet the turf is dark, although you know
That, not a span below,
A thousand germs are groping through the gloom,
And soon will burst their tomb.

Already, here and there, on frailest stems
Appear some azure gems,
Small as might deck, upon a gala day,
The forehead of a fay.

In gardens you may note amid the dearth
The crocus breaking earth;
And near the snowdrop's tender white and green,
The violet in its screen.

But many gleams and shadows need must pass
Along the budding grass,
And weeks go by, before the enamored South
Shall kiss the rose's mouth.

Still there's a sense of blossoms yet unborn
In the sweet airs of morn;
One almost looks to see the very street
Grow purple at his feet.

At times a fragrant breeze comes floating by,
And brings, you know not why,
A feeling as when eager crowds await
Before a palace gate

Some wondrous pageant; and you scarce would start,
If from a beech's heart,
A blue-eyed Dryad,[1] stepping forth, should say,
"Behold me! I am May!"

Ah! who would couple thoughts of war[2] and crime
With such a blessed time!
Who in the west wind's aromatic breath
Could hear the call of Death!

Yet not more surely shall the spring awake
The voice of wood and brake,
Than she shall rouse, for all her tranquil charms,
A million men to arms.

There shall be deeper hues upon her plains
Than all her sunlit rains,
And every gladdening influence around,
Can summon from the ground.

Oh! standing on this desecrated mold,
Methinks that I behold,
Lifting her bloody daisies up to God,
Spring kneeling on the sod,

And calling, with the voice of all her rills,
Upon the ancient hills
To fall and crush the tyrants and the slaves
Who turn her meads to graves.

1862 1862?

THE COTTON BOLL[1]

While I recline
At ease beneath
This immemorial pine,
Small sphere!
(By dusky fingers brought this morning here
And shown with boastful smiles),
I turn thy cloven sheath,
Through which the soft white fibers peer,
That, with their gossamer bands,
Unite, like love, the sea-divided lands,
And slowly, thread by thread,
Draw forth the folded strands,
Than which the trembling line,
By whose frail help yon startled spider fled
Down the tall spear-grass from his swinging bed,
Is scarce more fine;
And as the tangled skein
Unravels in my hands,
Betwixt me and the noonday light,
A veil seems lifted, and for miles and miles
The landscape broadens on my sight,
As, in the little boll, there lurked a spell
Like that which, in the ocean shell,
With mystic sound,
Breaks down the narrow walls that hem us round,
And turns some city lane
Into the restless main,
With all his capes and isles!

Yonder bird,
Which floats, as if at rest,
In those blue tracts above the thunder, where
No vapors cloud the stainless air,
And never sound is heard,
Unless at such rare time
When, from the City of the Blest,

---

[1] wood nymph
[2] The Civil War.

[1] This poem also breathes the spirit of the war.

Rings down some golden chime,
Sees not from his high place
So vast a cirque of summer space
As widens round me in one mighty field,
Which, rimmed by seas and sands,
Doth hail its earliest daylight in the beams
Of gray Atlantic dawns;
And, broad as realms made up of many lands,
Is lost afar
Behind the crimson hills and purple lawns
Of sunset, among plains which roll their streams
Against the Evening Star!
And lo!
To the remotest point of sight,
Although I gaze upon no waste of snow,
The endless field is white;
And the whole landscape glows,
For many a shining league away,
With such accumulated light
As Polar lands would flash beneath a tropic day!
Nor lack there (for the vision grows,
And the small charm within my hands—
More potent even than the fabled one,
Which oped whatever golden mystery
Lay hid in fairy wood or magic vale,
The curious ointment of the Arabian tale[2]—
Beyond all mortal sense
Doth stretch my sight's horizon, and I see,
Beneath its simple influence,
As if, with Uriel's[3] crown,
I stood in some great temple of the Sun,
And looked, as Uriel, down!)
Nor lack there pastures rich and fields all green
With all the common gifts of God,
For temperate airs and torrid sheen
Weave Edens of the sod;
Through lands which look one sea of billowy gold
Broad rivers wind their devious ways;
A hundred isles in their embraces fold,
A hundred luminous bays;
And through yon purple haze
Vast mountains lift their plumed peaks cloud-crowned;
And, save where up their sides the plowman creeps,
An unhewn forest girds them grandly round,
In whose dark shades a future navy sleeps!
Ye Stars, which, though unseen, yet with me gaze
Upon this loveliest fragment of the earth!
Thou Sun, that kindlest all thy gentlest rays
Above it, as to light a favorite hearth!
Ye Clouds, that in your temples in the West
See nothing brighter than its humblest flowers!
And you, ye Winds, that on the ocean's breast
Are kissed to coolness ere ye reach its bowers!
Bear witness with me in my song of praise,
And tell the world that, since the world began,
No fairer land hath fired a poet's lays,
Or given a home to man!

But these are charms already widely blown!
His be the meed whose pencil's trace
Hath touched our very swamps with grace,
And round whose tuneful way
All Southern laurels bloom;
The Poet of "The Woodlands,"[4] unto whom
Alike are known
The flute's low breathing and the trumpet's tone,
And the soft west wind's sighs;
But who shall utter all the debt,
O Land wherein all powers are met
That bind a people's heart,
The world doth owe thee at this day,
And which it never can repay,
Yet scarcely deigns to own!
Where sleeps the poet who shall fitly sing
The source wherefrom doth spring
That mighty commerce which, confined
To the mean channels of no selfish mart,
Goes out to every shore
Of this broad earth, and throngs the sea with ships
That bear no thunders; hushes hungry lips
In alien lands;
Joins with a delicate web remotest strands;
And gladdening rich and poor,
Doth gild Parisian domes,
Or feed the cottage-smoke of English homes,
And only bounds its blessings by mankind!
In offices like these, thy mission lies,
My Country! and it shall not end
As long as rain shall fall and heaven bend
In blue above thee; though thy foes be hard
And cruel as their weapons, it shall guard

---

[2] In the story of the Blind Baba, Abdalla, the magic ointment if applied to the left eye caused one to behold all the treasures of the earth, but if applied to the right eye destroyed the sight. Abdalla, doubting, applied it to both and lost both treasures and sight.

[3] One of the seven archangels mentioned in the *Books of Esdras* and by Milton. He is generally thought of as an angel of light.

[4] The home of William Gilmore Simms.

Thy hearth-stones as a bulwark; make thee great
In white and bloodless state;
And haply, as the years increase—
Still working through its humbler reach
With that large wisdom which the ages teach—
Revive the half-dead dream of universal peace!
As men who labor in that mine
Of Cornwall, hollowed out beneath the bed
Of ocean, when a storm rolls overhead,
Hear the dull booming of the world of brine
Above them, and a mighty muffled roar
Of winds and waters, yet toil calmly on,
And split the rock, and pile the massive ore,
Or carve a niche, or shape the arched roof;
So I, as calmly, weave my woof
Of song, chanting the days to come,
Unsilenced, though the quiet summer air
Stirs with the bruit of battles, and each dawn
Wakes from its starry silence to the hum
Of many gathering armies. Still,
In that we sometimes hear,
Upon the Northern winds, the voice of woe
Not wholly drowned in triumph, though I know
The end must crown us, and a few brief years
Dry all our tears,
I may not sing too gladly. To Thy will
Resigned, O Lord! we cannot all forget
That there is much even Victory must regret.
And, therefore, not too long
From the great burthen of our country's wrong
Delay our just release!
And, if it may be, save
These sacred fields of peace
From stain of patriot or of hostile blood!
Oh, help us, Lord! to roll the crimson flood
Back on its course, and, while our banners wing
Northward, strike with us! till the Goth[5] shall cling
To his own blasted altar-stones, and crave
Mercy; and we shall grant it, and dictate
The lenient future of his fate
There, where some rotting ships and crumbling quays
Shall one day mark the Port which ruled the Western seas.

1861-65

AT MAGNOLIA CEMETERY[1]

Sleep sweetly in your humble graves,
Sleep, martyrs of a fallen cause;
Though yet no marble column craves
The pilgrim here to pause.

In seeds of laurel in the earth
The blossom of your fame is blown,
And somewhere, waiting for its birth,
The shaft is in the stone!

Meanwhile, behalf the tardy years
Which keep in trust your storied tombs,
Behold! your sisters bring their tears,
And these memorial blooms.

Small tributes! but your shades will smile
More proudly on these wreaths today,
Than when some cannon-molded pile
Shall overlook this bay.

Stoop, angels, hither from the skies!
There is no holier spot of ground
Than where defeated valor lies,
By mourning beauty crowned.

1867

PAUL HAMILTON HAYNE

Born, Charleston, South Carolina, 1830, died, Grovetown, Georgia, 1886. He was a nephew of Senator Hayne of South Carolina. He graduated from the University of South Carolina, studied and practiced law, but, turning to literature, edited in succession several periodicals and contributed to *The Southern Literary Messenger.* He was a colonel in the Confederate army. Collections of his poems appeared from 1855 to 1882. Separate titles are *Avolio and Other Poems* 1857; *Legends and Lyrics,* 1872; *The Mountain of the Lovers,* 1875.

SHELLEY

Because they thought his doctrines were not just,[2]
Mankind assumed for him the chastening rod,
And tyrants reared in pride, and strong in lust,
Wounded the noblest of the sons of God;
The heart's most cherished benefactions riven,
Basely they strove to humble and malign
A soul whose charities were wide as heaven,

---

[5] Timrod considered the northern soldiers invaders like the Goths and Vandals that came down upon Rome.

[1] This poem, written for Memorial Day, 1867, in honor of the Confederate soldiers buried in Magnolia Cemetery, Charleston, was Timrod's last work.

[2] Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1792-1822, was criticized for his extreme political and social views.

Whose *deeds,* if not his *doctrines,* were divine;
And in the name of Him, whose sunshine warms
The evil as the righteous, deemed it good
To wreak their bigotry's relentless storms
On one whose nature was not understood.
Ah, well! God's ways are wondrous; it may be
His seal hath not been set to man's decree.

1857

ODE TO SLEEP

Beyond the sunset and the amber sea
To the lone depths of ether, cold and bare,
Thy influence, soul of all tranquillity,
Hallows the earth and awes the reverent air;
Yon laughing rivulet quells its silvery tune;
The pines, like priestly watchers tall and grim,
Stand mute against the pensive twilight dim,
Breathless to hail the advent of the moon;
From the white beach the ocean falls away
Coyly, and with a thrill; the sea-birds dart
Ghostlike from out the distance, and depart
With a gray fleetness, moaning the dead day;
The wings of Silence, overfolding space,
Droop with dusk grandeur from the heavenly steep,
And through the stillness gleams thy starry face,—
Serenest Angel—Sleep!

Come! woo me here, amid these flowery charms,
Breathe on my eyelids; press thy odorous lips
Close to mine own, enwreathe me in thine arms,
And cloud my spirit with thy sweet eclipse;
No dreams! no dreams! keep back the motley throng,—
For such are girded round with ghastly might,
And sing low burdens of despondent song,
Decked in the mockery of a lost delight;
I ask oblivion's balsam! the mute peace
Toned to still breathings, and the gentlest sighs;
Not music woven of rarest harmonies
Could yield me such elysium of release:
The tones of earth are weariness,—not only
'Mid the loud mart, and in the walks of trade,
But where the mountain Genius broodeth lonely,
In the cool pulsing of the sylvan shade;
Then bear me far into thy noiseless land;
Surround me with thy silence, deep on deep,
Until serene I stand
Close by a duskier country, and more grand,
Mysterious solitude, than thine, O Sleep!

As he whose veins a feverous frenzy burns,
Whose life-blood withers in the fiery drouth,
Feebly and with a languid longing turns
To the spring breezes gathering from the South,
So, feebly and with languid longing, I
Turn to thy wished nepenthe,[1] and implore
The golden dimness, the purpureal gloom
Which haunt thy poppied realm, and make the shore
Of thy dominion balmy with all bloom:
In the clear gulfs of thy serene profound,
Worn passions sink to quiet, sorrows pause,
Suddenly fainting to still-breathèd rest;
Thou own'st a magical atmosphere, which awes
The memories seething in the turbulent breast;
Which, muffling up the sharpness of all sound
Of mortal lamentations,—solely bears
The silvery minor toning of our woe,
All mellowed to harmonious underflow,
Soft as the sad farewells of dying years,—
Lulling as sunset showers that veil the west,
And sweet as Love's last tears
When over-welling hearts do mutely weep:
O griefs! O wailings! your tempestuous madness,
Merged in a regal quietude of sadness,
Wins a strange glory by the streams of sleep!

Then woo me here, amid these flowery charms,
Breathe on my eyelids, press thy odorous lips
Close to mine own,—enfold me in thine arms,
And cloud my spirit with thy sweet eclipse;

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[1] Originally an Egyptian drug—possibly opium; poetically, anything that causes sleep.

And while from waning depth to depth I fall,
Down lapsing[2] to the utmost depths of all,
Till wan forgetfulness obscurely stealing,
Creeps like an incantation on the soul,
And o'er the slow ebb of my conscious life
Dies the thin flush of the last conscious feeling,
And like abortive thunder, the dull roll
Of sullen passions ebbs far, far away,—
O Angel! loose the chords which cling to strife,
Sever the gossamer bondage of my breath,
And let me pass, gently as winds in May,
From the dim realm which owns thy shadowy sway,
To thy diviner sleep, O sacred Death!

1857

THE MOCKING-BIRDS

Oh, all day long they flood with song
The forest shades, the fields of light;
Heaven's heart is stilled and strangely thrilled
By ecstasies of lyric might;
From flower-crowned nooks of splendid dyes,
Lone dells a shadowy quiet girds;
Far echoes, wakening, gently rise,
And o'er the woodland track send back
Soft answers to the mocking-birds.

The winds, in awe, no gusty flaw
Dare breathe in rhythmic Beauty's face;
Nearer the pale-gold cloudlets draw
Above a charmed, melodious place:
Entrancèd Nature listening knows
No music set to mortal words,
Nor nightingales that woo the rose,
Can vie with these deep harmonies
Poured from the minstrel mocking-birds.

But, vaguely seen through gulfs of green,
We glimpse the plumed and choral throng—
Sole poets born whose instincts scorn
To do Song's lowliest utterance wrong:
Whate'er they sing, a sylvan art,
On each wild, wood-born note conferred,
Guides the hot brain and hurtling heart.
Oh magical flame, whence pulsing came
This passion of the mocking-bird?

Aye—pause and hark—be still, and mark
What countless grades of voice and tone
From bosk and tree, from strand and sea,
These small, winged genii make their own:
Fine lyric memories live again,
From tuneful burial disinterred,
To magnify the fiery strain
Which quivering trills and smites the hills
With rapture of the mocking-bird.

Aye—pause and hark—be still, and mark
How downward borne from Song's high clime
(No loftier haunts the English lark)
They revel, each a jocund mime:[1]
Their glad sides shake in bush and brake;
And farm-girls, bowed o'er cream and curd,
Glance up to smile, and think the while
Of all blithe things that flit on wings
None match the jovial mocking-bird.

When fun protrudes gay interludes
Of blissful, glorious unrestraint,
They run, all wild with motley moods,
Thro' Mirth's rare gamut, sly and quaint:
Humors grotesque and arabesque
Flash up from spirits brightly stirred;
And even the pedant at his desk,
Feeling in turn his spirit burn,
Laughs with the loudest mocking-bird.

Oh, all day long the world with song
Is flooded, till the twilight dim;
What time its whole mysterious soul
Seems rippling to the conscious brim:
Arcadian Eve through tranquil skies
Pastures her stars in radiant herds;
And still the unwearied echoes rise,
And down a silvery track send back
Fond greeting to the mocking-birds.

At last, fair boon, the summer moon,
Beyond the hazed horizon shines;
Ah, soon through night they wing their flight
To coverts of Æolian pines:
A tremulous hush—then sweet and grand,
From depths the dense, fair foliage girds,
Their love notes fill the enchanted land;
Through leaf-wrought bars they storm the stars,
These love songs of the mocking-birds.

VICKSBURG[2]

For sixty days and upwards,
A storm of shell and shot
Rained round us in a flaming shower,

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[2] gliding

[1] mimic

[2] Vicksburg was besieged from May 18 until July 4, 1863, and then fell into the hands of the Union forces.

But still we faltered not.
"If the noble city perish,"
Our grand young leader said,
"Let the only walls the foe shall scale
Be ramparts of the dead!"

For sixty days and upwards,
The eye of heaven waxed dim;
And even throughout God's holy morn,
O'er Christian prayer and hymn,
Arose a hissing tumult,
As if the fiends in air
Strove to engulf the voice of faith
In the shrieks of their despair.

There was wailing in the houses,
There was trembling on the marts,
While the tempest raged and thundered,
'Mid the silent thrill of hearts;
But the Lord, our shield, was with us,
And ere a month had sped,
Our very women walked the streets
With scarce one throb of dread.

And the little children gamboled,
Their faces purely raised,
Just for a wondering moment,
As the huge bombs whirled and blazed;
Then turned with silvery laughter
To the sports which children love,
Thrice-mailed in the sweet, instinctive thought
That the good God watched above.

Yet the hailing bolts fell faster,
From scores of flame-clad ships,
And about us, denser, darker,
Grew the conflict's wild eclipse,
Till a solid cloud closed o'er us,
Like a type of doom and ire,
Whence shot a thousand quivering tongues
Of forked and vengeful fire.

But the unseen hands of angels
Those death-shafts warned aside,
And the dove of heavenly mercy
Ruled o'er the battle tide;
In the houses ceased the wailing,
And through the war-scarred marts
The people strode, with step of hope,
To the music in their hearts.

ASPECTS OF THE PINES

Tall, somber, grim, against the morning sky
They rise, scarce touched by melancholy airs,
Which stir the fadeless foliage dreamfully,
As if from realms of mystical despairs.

Tall, somber, grim, they stand with dusky gleams
Brightening to gold within the woodland's core,
Beneath the gracious noontide's tranquil beams,—
But the weird winds of morning sigh no more.

A stillness, strange, divine, ineffable,
Broods round and o'er them in the wind's surcease,
And on each tinted copse and shimmering dell
Rests the mute rapture of deep-hearted peace.

Last, sunset comes—the solemn joy and might
Borne from the west when cloudless day declines—
Low, flute-like breezes sweep the waves of light,
And, lifting dark green tresses of the pines,

Till every lock is luminous—gently float,
Fraught with hale odors up the heavens afar,
To faint when twilight on her virginal throat
Wears for a gem the tremulous vesper star.

THE ROSE AND THORN

She's loveliest of the festal throng
In delicate form and Grecian face,—
A beautiful, incarnate song,
A marvel of harmonious grace,
And yet I know the truth I speak:
From those gay groups she stands apart,
A rose upon her tender cheek,
A thorn within her heart.

Though bright her eyes' bewildering gleams,
Fair tremulous lips and shining hair,
A something born of mournful dreams
Breathes round her sad enchanted air;
No blithesome thoughts at hide and seek
From out her dimples smiling start;
If still the rose be on her cheek,
A thorn is in her heart.

Young lover, tossed 'twixt hope and fear,
Your whispered vow and yearning eyes
Yon marble Clytie[1] pillared near

---

[1] A nymph beloved by Apollo.

Could move as soon to soft replies;
Or, if she thrill at words you speak,
Love's memory prompts the sudden start;
The rose has paled upon her cheek,
The thorn has pierced her heart.

THE PINE'S MYSTERY

Listen! the somber foliage of the Pine,
A swart Gitana[1] of the woodland trees,
Is answering what we may but half divine,
To those soft whispers of the twilight breeze!

Passion and mystery murmur through the leaves,
Passion and mystery, touched by deathless pain.
Whose monotone of long, low anguish grieves
For something lost that shall not live again!

A LITTLE WHILE I FAIN WOULD LINGER YET[2]

A little while (my life is almost set!)
I fain would pause along the downward way,
Musing an hour in this sad sunset-ray,
While, Sweet! our eyes with tender tears are wet:
A little hour I fain would linger yet.

A little while I fain would linger yet,
All for love's sake, for love that cannot tire;
Though fervid youth be dead, with youth's desire,
And hope has faded to a vague regret,
A little while I fain would linger yet.

A little while I fain would linger here:
Behold! who knows what strange, mysterious bars
'Twixt souls that love may rise in other stars?
Nor can love deem the face of death is fair:
A little while I still would linger here.

A little while I yearn to hold thee fast,
Hand locked in hand, and loyal heart to heart;
(O pitying Christ! those woeful words, "*We* part!")
So ere the darkness fall, the light be past,
A little while I fain would hold thee fast.

A little while, when night and twilight meet:
Behind, our broken years! before, the deep
Weird wonder of the last unfathomed sleep,—
A little while I still would clasp thee Sweet;
A little while, when night and twilight meet.

A little while I fain would linger here;
Behold! who knows what soul-dividing bars
Earth's faithful loves may part in other stars?
Nor can love deem the face of death is fair:
A little while I still would linger here.

IN HARBOR

I think it is over, over,
I think it is over at last:
Voices of foeman and lover,
The sweet and the bitter have passed:
Life, like a tempest of ocean
Hath outblown its ultimate blast:
There's but a faint sobbing seaward
While the calm of the tide deepens leeward,
And behold! like the welcoming quiver
Of heart-pulses throbbed through the river,
Those lights in the harbor at last,
The heavenly harbor at last!

I feel it is over! over!
For the winds and the waters surcease;
Ah, few were the days of the rover
That smiled in the beauty of peace!
And distant and dim was the omen
That hinted redress or release!
From the ravage of life, and its riot,
What marvel I yearn for the quiet
Which bides in the harbor at last,—
For the lights, with their welcoming quiver
That throbs through the sanctified river,
Which girdles the harbor at last,
This heavenly harbor at last?

I *know* it is over, over,
I know it is over at last!
Down sail! the sheathed anchor uncover,
For the stress of the voyage has passed:
Life, like a tempest of ocean

---

[1] gypsy maiden
[2] This and the following poem were written shortly before the death of Hayne.

Hath outbreathed its ultimate blast:
There's but a faint sobbing to seaward,
While the calm of the tide deepens leeward;
And behold! like the welcoming quiver
Of heart-pulses throbbed through the river,
Those lights in the harbor at last,
The heavenly harbor at last!

ABRAM JOSEPH RYAN

Born, Norfolk, Virginia, 1839, died, Louisville, Kentucky, 1886. He studied from youth for the Roman Catholic priesthood, was ordained, and soon became chaplain to a Confederate regiment with which he served, sometimes in the ranks, until the close of the war. After the war he engaged in religious newspaper work in New Orleans and in Augusta, Georgia, as well as in pastoral duties. His *Poems* were published in 1880.

THE CONQUERED BANNER

Furl that Banner, for 'tis weary;
Round its staff 'tis drooping dreary;
Furl it, fold it,—it is best;
For there's not a man to wave it,
And there's not a sword to save it,
And there's not one left to lave it
In the blood which heroes gave it;
And its foes now scorn and brave it;
Furl it, hide it,—let it rest!

Take that Banner down! 'tis tattered;
Broken is its staff and shattered;
And the valiant hosts are scattered,
Over whom it floated high.
Oh, 'tis hard for us to fold it,
Hard to think there's none to hold it,
Hard that those who once unrolled it
Now must furl it with a sigh!

Furl that Banner—furl it sadly!
Once ten thousands hailed it gladly,
And ten thousands wildly, madly,
Swore it should forever wave—
Swore that foeman's sword should never
Hearts like theirs entwined dissever,
Till that flag should float forever
O'er their freedom or their grave!

Furl it! for the hands that grasped it,
And the hearts that fondly clasped it,
Cold and dead are lying low;
And that Banner—it is trailing,
While around it sounds the wailing
Of its people in their woe.

For, though conquered, they adore it—
Love the cold, dead hands that bore it,
Weep for those who fell before it,
Pardon those who trailed and tore it—
But oh, wildly they deplore it,
Now who furl and fold it so!

Furl that Banner! True, 'tis gory,
Yet 'tis wreathed around with glory,
And 'twill live in song and story
Though its folds are in the dust!
For its fame on brightest pages,
Penned by poets and by sages,
Shall go sounding down the ages—
Furl its folds though now we must.

Furl that Banner, softly, slowly,
Treat it gently—it is holy,
For it droops above the dead.
Touch it not—unfold it never;
Let it droop there, furled forever,—
For its people's hopes are fled!

1865

SIDNEY LANIER*

Born, Macon, Georgia, 1842, died, Lynn, North Carolina, 1881. Lanier graduated from Oglethorpe College, Georgia, taught there, entered the Confederate army and served during most of the war. He was taken prisoner, and came home with greatly impaired health. He then studied and practiced law, but turned to literature and music. He was an accomplished musician, especially with the flute. He wrote the official ode for the Centennial Exposition, 1876. From 1879 he was a lecturer on English literature at Johns Hopkins University. A volume of his poems appeared in 1877, *The Science of English Verse* in 1880, and *The English Novel* in 1883.

BARNACLES

I

My soul is sailing through the sea,
But the Past is heavy and hindereth me.
The Past hath crusted cumbrous shells
That hold the flesh of cold sea-mells
About my soul.
The huge waves wash, the high waves roll,
Each barnacle clingeth and worketh dole
And hindereth me from sailing!

II

Old Past let go, and drop i' the sea
Till fathomless waters cover thee!
For I am living but thou art dead;
Thou drawest back, I strive ahead
The Day to find.
Thy shells unbind! Night comes behind,
I needs must hurry with the wind
And trim me best for sailing!

1867 1867

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CORN

Today the woods are trembling through and through
With shimmering forms, that flash before my view,
Then melt in green as dawn-stars melt in blue.
The leaves that wave against my cheek caress
Like women's hands; the embracing boughs express
A subtlety of mighty tenderness;
The copse-depths into little noises start,
That sound anon like beatings of a heart,
Anon like talk 'twixt lips not far apart.
The beech dreams balm, as a dreamer hums a song;
Through that vague wafture, expirations strong
Throb from young hickories breathing deep and long
With stress and urgence bold of prisoned spring
And ecstasy of burgeoning.[1]
Now, since the dew-plashed road of morn is dry,
Forth venture odors of more quality
And heavenlier giving. Like Jove's locks awry,
Long muscadines[2]
Rich-wreathe the spacious foreheads of great pines,
And breathe ambrosial passion from their vines.
I pray with mosses, ferns and flowers shy
That hide like gentle nuns from human eye
To lift adoring perfumes to the sky.
I hear faint bridal-sighs of brown and green
Dying to silent hints of kisses keen
As far lights fringe into a pleasant sheen.
I start at fragmentary whispers, blown
From undertalks of leafy souls unknown,
Vague purports sweet, of inarticulate tone.

Dreaming of gods, men, nuns and brides, between
Old companies of oaks that inward lean
To join their radiant amplitudes of green
I slowly move, with ranging looks that pass
Up from the matted miracles of grass
Into yon veined complex of space,
Where sky and leafage interlace
So close, the heaven of blue is seen
Inwoven with a heaven of green.

I wander to the zigzag-cornered fence
Where sassafras, intrenched in brambles dense,
Contests with stolid vehemence
The march of culture, setting limb and thorn
As pikes against the army of the corn.

There, while I pause, my fieldward-faring eyes
Take harvests, where the stately corn-ranks rise
Of inward dignities
And large benignities and insights wise,
Graces and modest majesties.
Thus, without theft, I reap another's field;
Thus, without tilth, I house a wondrous yield,
And heap my heart with quintuple crops concealed.

Look, out of line one tall corn-captain stands
Advanced beyond the foremost of his bands,
And waves his blades upon the very edge
And hottest thicket of the battling hedge.
Thou lustrous stalk, that ne'er mayst walk nor talk,
Still shalt thou type the poet-soul sublime
That leads the vanward of his timid time
And sings up cowards with commanding rime—
Soul calm, like thee, yet fain, like thee, to grow
By double increment, above, below;
Soul homely, as thou art, yet rich in grace like thee,
Teaching the yeomen selfless chivalry
That moves in gentle curves of courtesy;
Soul filled like thy long veins with sweetness tense,
By every godlike sense
Transmuted from the four wild elements.
Drawn to high plans,
Thou lift'st more stature than a mortal man's,
Yet ever piercest downward in the mold
And keepest hold
Upon the reverend and steadfast earth

---

[1] Bursting of buds.
[2] Vines of the Malaga grape.

That gave thee birth;
Yea, standest smiling in thy future grave,
Serene and brave,
With unremitting breath
Inhaling life from death,
Thine epitaph writ fair in fruitage eloquent,
Thyself thy monument.

As poets should
Thou hast built up thy hardihood
With universal food,
Drawn in select proportion fair
From honest mold and vagabond air;
From darkness of the dreadful night,
And joyful light;
From antique ashes, whose departed flame
In thee has finer life and longer fame;
From wounds and balms,
From storms and calms,
From potsherds and dry bones
And ruin-stones.
Into thy vigorous substance thou hast wrought
Whate'er the hand of Circumstance hath brought;
Yea, into cool solacing green hast spun
White radiance hot from out the sun.
So thou dost mutually leaven
Strength of earth with grace of heaven;
So thou dost marry new and old
Into a one of higher mold;
So thou dost reconcile the hot and cold,
The dark and bright,
And many a heart-perplexing opposite:
And so,
Akin by blood to high and low,
Fitly thou playest out thy poet's part,
Richly expending thy much-bruisèd heart
In equal care to nourish lord in hall
Or beast in stall:
Thou took'st from all that thou might'st give to all.

O steadfast dweller on the selfsame spot
Where thou wast born, that still repinest not—
Type of the home-fond heart, the happy lot!—
Deeply thy mild content rebukes the land
Whose flimsy homes, built on the shifting sand
Of trade, forever rise and fall
With alternation whimsical,
Enduring scarce a day,
Then swept away
By swift engulfments of incalculable tides
Whereon capricious Commerce rides.
Look, thou substantial spirit of content!
Across this little vale, thy continent,
To where, beyond the moldering mill,
Yon old deserted Georgian hill
Bares to the sun his piteous aged crest
And seamy breast,
By restless-hearted children left to lie
Untended there beneath the heedless sky,
As barbarous folk expose their old to die.
Upon that generous-rounding side,
With gullies scarified
Where keen Neglect his lash hath plied,
Dwelt one I knew of old, who played at toil,
And gave to coquette Cotton soul and soil.
Scorning the slow reward of patient grain,
He sowed his heart with hopes of swifter gain,
Then sat him down and waited for the rain.
He sailed in borrowed ships of usury—
A foolish Jason on a treacherous sea,
Seeking the Fleece and finding misery.
Lulled by smooth-rippling loans, in idle trance
He lay, content that unthrift Circumstance
Should plow for him the stony field of Chance.
Yea, gathering crops whose worth no man might tell,
He staked his life on games of Buy-and-Sell,
And turned each field into a gambler's hell.
Aye, as each year began,
My farmer to the neighboring city ran;
Passed with a mournful anxious face
Into the banker's inner place;
Parleyed, excused, pleaded for longer grace;
Railed at the drought, the worm, the rust, the grass;
Protested ne'er again 'twould come to pass;
With many an *oh* and *if* and *but alas*
Parried or swallowed searching questions rude,
And kissed the dust to soften Dives's[3] mood.
At last, small loans by pledges great renewed,

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[3] "a rich man" (Lat.) See *Luke* xiv. 19.

He issues smiling from the fatal door,
And buys with lavish hand his yearly store
Till his small borrowings will yield no more.
Aye, as each year declined,
With bitter heart and ever-brooding mind
He mourned his fate unkind.
In dust, in rain, with might and main,
He nursed his cotton, cursed his grain,
Fretted for news that made him fret again,
Snatched at each telegram of Future Sale,
And thrilled with Bulls' or Bears' alternate wail—
In hope or fear alike forever pale.
And thus from year to year, through hope and fear,
With many a curse and many a secret tear,
Striving in vain his cloud of debt to clear,
At last
He woke to find his foolish dreaming past,
And all his best-of-life the easy prey
Of squandering scamps and quacks that lined his way
With vile array,
From rascal statesman down to petty knave;
Himself, at best, for all his bragging brave,
A gamester's catspaw and a banker's slave.
Then, worn and gray, and sick with deep unrest,
He fled away into the oblivious West,
Unmourned, unblest.

Old hill! old hill! thou gashed and hairy Lear[4]
Whom the divine Cordelia of the year,
E'en pitying Spring, will vainly strive to cheer—
King, that no subject man nor beast may own,
Discrowned, undaughtered and alone—
Yet shall the great God turn thy fate,
And bring thee back into thy monarch state
And majesty immaculate.
Lo, through hot waverings of the August morn,
Thou givest from thy vasty sides forlorn
Visions of golden treasuries of corn—
Ripe largesse lingering for some bolder heart
That manfully shall take thy part,
And tend thee,
And defend thee,
With antique sinew and with modern art.

1874 1875

A SONG OF THE FUTURE

Sail fast, sail fast,
Ark of my hopes, Ark of my dreams;
Sweep lordly o'er the drownèd Past,
Fly glittering through the sun's strange beams;
Sail fast, sail fast.
Breaths of new buds from off some drying lea
With news about the Future scent the sea:
My brain is beating like the heart of Haste:
I'll loose me a bird upon this Present waste;
Go, trembling song,
And stay not long; oh, stay not long:
Thou'rt only a gray and sober dove,
But thine eye is faith and thy wing is love.

1875 1876

EVENING SONG

Look off, dear Love, across the sallow sands,
And mark yon meeting of the sun and sea,
How long they kiss in sight of all the lands.
Ah! longer, longer, we.

Now in the sea's red vintage melts the sun,
As Egypt's pearl dissolved in rosy wine,
And Cleopatra night drinks all.[1] 'Tis done,
Love, lay thine hand in mine.

Come forth, sweet stars, and comfort heaven's heart;
Glimmer, ye waves, round else-unlighted sands.
O night! divorce our sun and sky apart
Never our lips, our hands.

1876 1877

THE STIRRUP-CUP

Death, thou'rt a cordial old and rare:
Look how compounded, with what care!
Time got his wrinkles reaping thee
Sweet herbs from all antiquity.

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[4] See Shakspere's *King Lear.*

[1] Pliny says that Cleopatra in a wager with Antony dissolved in wine and drank a priceless pearl. See also *Hamlet* V. ii. 283.

David to thy distillage went,
Keats, and Gotama[1] excellent,
Omar Khayyám,[2] and Chaucer bright,
And Shakspere for a king-delight.

These were to sweeten thee with song;
The blood of heroes made thee strong.
What heroes! Ah, for shame, for shame!
The worthiest died without a name.

Then, Time, let not a drop be spilt:
Hand me the cup whene'er thou wilt;
'Tis thy rich stirrup-cup to me;
I'll drink it down right smilingly.

1877 1877

FROM THE FLATS

What heartache—ne'er a hill!
Inexorable, vapid, vague and chill
The drear sand-levels drain my spirit low.
With one poor word they tell me all they know;
Whereat their stupid tongues, to tease my pain,
Do drawl it o'er again and o'er again.
They hurt my heart with griefs I cannot name:
Always the same, the same.

Nature hath no surprise,
No ambuscade of beauty 'gainst mine eyes
From brake or lurking dell or deep defile;
No humors, frolic forms—this mile, that mile;
No rich reserves or happy-valley hopes
Beyond the bend of roads, the distant slopes.
Her fancy fails, her wild is all run tame:
Ever the same, the same.

Oh might I through these tears
But glimpse some hill my Georgia high uprears,
Where white the quartz and pink the pebble shine,
The hickory heavenward strives, the muscadine[3]
Swings o'er the slope, the oak's far-falling shade
Darkens the dogwood in the bottom-glade,
And down the hollow from a ferny nook
Bright leaps a living brook!

1877 1877

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[1] The family name of Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, who lived in the 6th century.
[2] A Persian poet of the 11th and 12th centuries.
[3] See n. 2, p. 831.

SONG OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE[1]

Out of the hills of Habersham,[2]
Down the valleys of Hall,
I hurry amain to reach the plain,
Run the rapid and leap the fall,
Split at the rock and together again,
Accept my bed, or narrow or wide,
And flee from folly on every side
With a lover's pain to attain the plain
Far from the hills of Habersham,
Far from the valleys of Hall.

All down the hills of Habersham,
All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried *Abide, abide,*
The willful waterweeds held me thrall,
The laving laurel turned my tide,
The ferns and the fondling grass said *Stay,*
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little reeds sighed *Abide, abide,*
Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall.

High o'er the hills of Habersham,
Veiling the valleys of Hall,
The hickory told me manifold
Fair tales of shade, the poplar tall
Wrought me her shadowy self to hold,
The chestnut, the oak, the walnut, the pine,
Overleaning, with flickering meaning and sign,
Said, *Pass not, so cold, these manifold
Deep shades of the hills of Habersham,
These glades in the valleys of Hall.*

And oft in the hills of Habersham,
And oft in the valleys of Hall,
The white quartz shone, and the smooth brook-stone
Did bar me of passage with friendly brawl,
And many a luminous jewel lone
—Crystals clear or a-cloud with mist,
Ruby, garnet, and amethyst—
Made lures with the lights of streaming stone
In the clefts of the hills of Habersham,
In the beds of the valleys of Hall.

But oh, not the hills of Habersham,
And oh, not the valleys of Hall
Avail: I am fain for to water the plain.
Downward the voices of Duty call—
Downward, to toil and be mixed with the main,

---

[1] Cf. Tennyson's *The Brook.*
[2] Habersham and Hall are counties in Georgia on the upper waters of the Chattahoochee.

The dry fields burn, and the mills are to turn,
And a myriad flowers mortally yearn,
And the lordly main from beyond the plain
Calls o'er the hills of Habersham,
Calls through the valleys of Hall.

1877 1877

THE MOCKING BIRD

Superb and sole, upon a pluméd spray
That o'er the general leafage boldly grew,
He summ'd the woods in song; or typic drew[1]
The watch of hungry hawks, the lone dismay
Of languid doves when long their lovers stray,
And all birds' passion-plays that sprinkle dew
At morn in brake or bosky avenue.
Whate'er birds did or dreamed, this bird could say.
Then down he shot, bounced airily along
The sward, twitched-in a grasshopper, made song
Midflight, perched, prinked, and to his art again.
Sweet Science, this large riddle read me plain:
How may the death of that dull insect be
The life of yon trim Shakspere on the tree?

1877

THE HARLEQUIN OF DREAMS

Swift, through some trap mine eyes have never found,
Dim-panel'd in the painted scene of Sleep,
Thou, giant Harlequin of Dreams, dost leap
Upon my spirit's stage. Then Sight and Sound,
Then Space and Time, then Language, Mete and Bound,
And all familiar Forms that firmly keep
Man's reason in the road, change faces, peep
Betwixt the legs and mock the daily round.
Yet thou canst more than mock: sometimes my tears
At midnight break through bounden lids—a sign
Thou hast a heart: and oft thy little leaven
Of dream-taught wisdom works me bettered years.
In one night witch, saint, trickster, fool divine,
I think thou'rt Jester at the Court of Heaven!

1878 1878

THE MARSHES OF GLYNN[1]

Glooms of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided and woven
With intricate shades of the vines that myriad-cloven
Clamber the forks of the multiform boughs,—
Emerald twilights,—
Virginal shy lights,
Wrought of the leaves to allure to the whisper of vows,
When lovers pace timidly down through the green colonnades
Of the dim sweet woods, of the dear dark woods,
Of the heavenly woods and glades,
That run to the radiant marginal sand-beach within
The wide sea-marshes of Glynn;—

Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noon-day fire,—
Wildwood privacies, closets of lone desire,
Chamber from chamber parted with wavering arras of leaves,—
Cells for the passionate pleasure of prayer to the soul that grieves,
Pure with a sense of the passing of saints through the wood,
Cool for the dutiful weighing of ill with good;—

O braided dusks of the oak and woven shades of the vine,
While the riotous noon-day sun of the June-day long did shine
Ye held me fast in your heart and I held you fast in mine;
But now when the noon is no more, and riot is rest,
And the sun is a-wait at the ponderous gate of the West,
And the slant yellow beam down the wood-aisle doth seem
Like a lane into heaven that leads from a dream,—
Ay, now, when my soul all day hath drunken the soul of the oak,

---

[1] Represented in his song.

[1] The marshes of Glynn County, Georgia, on the seacoast.

And my heart is at ease from men, and the wearisome sound of the stroke
Of the scythe of time and the trowel of trade is low,
And belief overmasters doubt, and I know that I know,
And my spirit is grown to a lordly great compass within,
That the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn
Will work me no fear like the fear they have wrought me of yore
When length was fatigue, and when breadth was but bitterness sore,
And when terror and shrinking and dreary unnamable pain
Drew over me out of the merciless miles of the plain,—

Oh, now, unafraid, I am fain to face
The vast sweet visage of space.
To the edge of the wood I am drawn, I am drawn,
Where the gray beach glimmering runs, as a belt of the dawn,
For a mete and a mark
To the forest-dark:—
So:
Affable live-oak leaning low—
Thus—with your favor—soft, with a reverent hand,
(Not lightly touching your person, Lord of the land!)
Bending your beauty aside, with a step I stand
On the firm-packed sand,
Free
By a world of marsh that borders a world of sea.

Sinuous southward and sinuous northward the shimmering band
Of the sand-beach fastens the fringe of the marsh to the folds of the land.
Inward and outward to northward and southward the beach-lines linger and curl
As a silver-wrought garment that clings to and follows the firm sweet limbs of a girl.
Vanishing, swerving, evermore curving again into sight,
Softly the sand-beach wavers away to a dim gray looping of light.
And what if behind me to westward the wall of the woods stands high?
The world lies east: how ample, the marsh and the sea and the sky!
A league and a league of marsh-grass waist-high, broad in the blade,
Green, and all of a height, and unflecked with a light or a shade,
Stretch leisurely off, in a pleasant plain,
To the terminal blue of the main.

Oh, what is abroad in the marsh and the terminal sea?
Somehow my soul seems suddenly free
From the weighing of fate and the sad discussion of sin,
By the length and the breadth and the sweep of the marshes of Glynn.

Ye marshes, how candid and simple and nothing-withholding and free
Ye publish yourselves to the sky and offer yourselves to the sea!

Tolerant plains, that suffer the sea and the rains and the sun,
Ye spread and span like the catholic[2] man who hath mightily won
God out of knowledge and good out of infinite pain
And sight out of blindness and purity out of a stain.

As the marsh-hen secretly builds on the watery sod,
Behold I will build me a nest on the greatness of God:
I will fly in the greatness of God as the marsh-hen flies
In the freedom that fills all the space 'twixt the marsh and the skies:
By so many roots as the marsh-grass sends in the sod
I will heartily lay me a hold on the greatness of God:
Oh, like to the greatness of God is the greatness within
The range of the marshes, the liberal marshes of Glynn.

And the sea lends large, as the marsh: lo, out of his plenty the sea
Pours fast: full soon the time of the flood-tide must be:
Look how the grace of the sea doth go
About and about through the intricate channels that flow
Here and there,
Everywhere,
Till his waters have flooded the uttermost creeks and the low-lying lanes,

---

[2] liberal, tolerant-minded

And the marsh is meshed with a million veins,
That like as with rosy and silvery essences flow
In the rose-and-silver evening glow.
Farewell, my lord Sun!
The creeks overflow: a thousand rivulets run
'Twixt the roots of the sod; the blades of the marsh-grass stir;
Passeth a hurrying sound of wings that westward whirr:
Passeth, and all is still; and the currents cease to run;
And the sea and the marsh are one.

How still the plains of the waters be!
The tide is in his ecstasy.
The tide is at his highest height:
And it is night.

And now from the Vast of the Lord will the waters of sleep
Roll in on the souls of men,
But who will reveal to our waking ken
The forms that swim and the shapes that creep
Under the waters of sleep?
And I would I could know what swimmeth below when the tide comes in
On the length and the breadth of the marvelous marshes of Glynn.

1878 1879?

THE REVENGE OF HAMISH

It was three slim does and a ten-tined[1] buck in the bracken lay;
And all of a sudden the sinister smell of a man,
Awaft on a wind-shift, wavered and ran
Down the hill-side, and sifted along through the bracken and passed that way.

Then Nan got a-tremble at nostril; she was the daintiest doe;
In the print of her velvet flank on the velvet fern
She reared, and rounded her ears in turn.
Then the buck leaped up, and his head as a king's to a crown did go

Full high in a breeze, and he stood as if Death had the form of a deer;
And the two slim does long lazily stretching arose,
For their day-dream slowlier came to a close,
Till they woke and were still, breath-bound with waiting and wonder and fear.

Then Alan the huntsman sprang over the hillock, the hounds shot by,
The does and the ten-tined buck made a marvelous bound,
The hounds swept after with never a sound,
But Alan loud winded his horn in sign that the quarry was nigh.

For at dawn of that day proud Maclean of Lochbuy to the hunt had waxed wild,
And he cursed at old Alan till Alan fared off with the hounds
For to drive him the deer to the lower glen-grounds:
"I will kill a red deer," quoth Maclean, "in the sight of the wife and the child."

So gayly he paced with the wife and the child to his chosen stand;
But he hurried tall Hamish the henchman ahead: "Go turn,"
Cried Maclean—"if the deer seek to cross to the burn,
Do thou turn them to me: nor fail, lest thy back be red as thy hand!"

Now hard-fortuned Hamish, half blown of his breath with the height of the hill,
Was white in the face when the ten-tined buck and the does
Drew leaping to burn-ward; huskily rose
His shouts, and his nether lip twitched, and his legs were o'er-weak for his will.

So the deer darted lightly by Hamish and bounded away to the burn.
But Maclean never bating his watch tarried waiting below.
Still Hamish hung heavy with fear for to go
All the space of an hour; then he went, and his face was greenish and stern,

And his eye sat back in the socket, and shrunken the eyeballs shone,
As withdrawn from a vision of deeds it were shame to see.
"Now, now, grim henchman, what is't with thee?"

---

[1] With ten points on the antlers.

Brake Maclean, and his wrath rose red as a beacon the wind hath upblown.

"Three does and a ten-tined buck made out," spoke Hamish, full mild,
"And I ran for to turn, but my breath it was blown, and they passed;
I was weak, for ye called ere I broke me my fast."
Cried Maclean: "Now a ten-tined buck in the sight of the wife and the child

I had killed if the gluttonous kern had not wrought me a snail's own wrong!"
Then he sounded, and down came kinsmen and clansmen all:
"Ten blows, for ten tine, on his back let fall,
And reckon no stroke if the blood follow not at the bite of the thong!"

So Hamish made bare, and took him his strokes; at the last he smiled.
"Now I'll to the burn," quoth Maclean, "for it still may be
If a slimmer-paunched henchman will hurry with me,
I shall kill me the ten-tined buck for a gift to the wife and the child!"

Then the clansmen departed, by this path and that; and over the hill
Sped Maclean with an outward wrath for an inward shame;
And that place of the lashing full quiet became;
And the wife and the child stood sad; and bloody-backed Hamish sat still.

But look! red Hamish has risen; quick about and about turns he.
"There is none betwixt me and the crag-top!" he screams under breath.
Then, livid as Lazarus lately from death,
He snatches the child from the mother, and clambers the crag toward the sea.

Now the mother drops breath; she is dumb, and her heart goes dead for a space,
Till the motherhood, mistress of death, shrieks, shrieks through the glen,
And that place of the lashing is live with men,
And Maclean, and the gillie[2] that told him, dash up in a desperate race.

Not a breath's time for asking; an eye-glance reveals all the tale untold.
They follow mad Hamish afar up the crag toward the sea,
And the lady cries: "Clansmen, run for a fee!—
Yon castle and lands to the two first hands that shall hook him and hold

Fast Hamish back from the brink!"—and ever she flies up the steep,
And the clansmen pant, and they sweat, and they jostle and strain.
But, mother, 'tis vain; but, father, 'tis vain;
Stern Hamish stands bold on the brink, and dangles the child o'er the deep.

Now a faintness falls on the men that run, and they all stand still.
And the wife prays Hamish as if he were God, on her knees,
Crying: "Hamish! O Hamish! but please, but please
For to spare him!" and Hamish still dangles the child, with a wavering will.

On a sudden he turns; with a sea-hawk scream, and a gibe, and a song,
Cries: "So; I will spare ye the child if, in sight of ye all,
Ten blows on Maclean's bare back shall fall,
And ye reckon no stroke if the blood follow not at the bite of the thong!"

Then Maclean he set hardly his tooth to his lip that his tooth was red,
Breathed short for a space, said: "Nay, but it never shall be!
Let me hurl off the damnable hound in the sea!"
But the wife: "Can Hamish go fish us the child from the sea, if dead?

Say yea!—Let them lash *me*, Hamish?"—"Nay!"—"Husband, the lashing will heal;
But, oh, who will heal me the bonny sweet bairn in his grave?
Could ye cure me my heart with the death of a knave?
Quick! Love! I will bare thee—so—kneel!" Then Maclean 'gan slowly to kneel

With never a word, till presently downward he jerked to the earth.
Then the henchman—he that smote Hamish—would tremble and lag;
"Strike, hard!" quoth Hamish, full stern, from the crag;

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[2] man-servant

Then he struck him, and "One!" sang Hamish, and danced with the child in his mirth.

And no man spake beside Hamish; he counted each stroke with a song.
When the last stroke fell, then he moved him a pace down the height,
And he held forth the child in the heart-aching sight
Of the mother, and looked all pitiful grave, as repenting a wrong.

And there as the motherly arms stretched out with the thanksgiving prayer—
And there as the mother crept up with a fearful swift pace,
Till her finger nigh felt of the bairnie's face—
In a flash fierce Hamish turned round and lifted the child in the air,

And sprang with the child in his arms from the horrible height in the sea,
Shrill screeching, "Revenge!" in the wind-rush; and pallid Maclean,
Age-feeble with anger and impotent pain,
Crawled up on the crag, and lay flat, and locked hold of dead roots of a tree—

And gazed hungrily o'er, and the blood from his back drip-dripped in the brine,
And a sea-hawk flung down a skeleton fish as he flew,
And the mother stared white on the waste of blue,
And the wind drove a cloud to seaward, and the sun began to shine.

1878 1878

THE CRYSTAL

At midnight, death's and truth's unlocking-time,
When far within the spirit's hearing rolls
The great soft rumble of the course of things—
A bulk of silence in a mask of sound—
When darkness clears our vision that by day
Is sun-blind, and the soul's a ravening owl
For truth and flitteth here and there about
Low-lying woody tracts of time, and oft
Is minded for to sit upon a bough,
Dry-dead and sharp, of some long-stricken tree
And muse in that gaunt place—'twas then my heart,
Deep in the meditative dark, cried out:

"Ye companies of governor-spirits grave,
Bards, and old bringers-down of flaming news
From steep-walled heavens, holy malcontents,
Sweet seers, and stellar visionaries, all
That brood about the skies of poesy,
Full bright ye shine, insuperable stars;
Yet, if a man look hard upon you, none
With total luster blazeth, no, not one
But hath some heinous freckle of the flesh
Upon his shining cheek, not one but winks
His ray, opaqued with intermittent mist
Of defect; yea, you masters all must ask
Some sweet forgiveness, which we leap to give,
We lovers of you, heavenly-glad to meet
Your largesse so with love, and interplight
Your geniuses with our mortalities.

Thus unto thee, O sweetest Shakspere sole,
A hundred hurts a day I do forgive
('Tis little, but, enchantment! 'tis for thee):
Small curious quibble;[1] Juliet's prurient pun[2]
In the poor, pale face of Romeo's fancied death;
Cold rant of Richard;[3] Henry's fustian roar
Which frights away that sleep he invocates;[4]
Wronged Valentine's unnatural haste to yield;[5]
Too-silly shifts of maids that mask as men
In faint disguises that could ne'er disguise—
Viola, Julia, Portia, Rosalind;[6]
Fatigues most drear, and needless overtax
Of speech obscure that had as lief be plain;
Last I forgive (with more delight, because
'Tis more to do) the labored-lewd discourse
That e'en thy young invention's youngest heir[7]
Besmirched the world with.

Father Homer! thee,
Thee also I forgive thy sandy wastes
Of prose and catalogue, thy drear harangues

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[1] Any cheap play on words. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, I. i. 11-36. *Hamlet*, V. i. 1 ff. Or, possibly, the allusion is to *The Merchant of Venice*, with particular reference to the "pound of flesh" upon which rests the main plot.

[2] *Romeo and Juliet*, III. ii.

[3] *Richard III*, I. i. 1, ff.

[4] *2 Henry IV*, III. i. 5-31.

[5] *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, V. iv. 77-83.

[6] In *Twelfth Night*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *As You Like It*, respectively.

[7] *Venus and Adonis*.

That tease the patience of the centuries;
Thy sleazy scrap of story—but a rogue's
Rape of a light-o'-love—too soiled a patch
To broider with the gods.

Thee, Socrates,
Thou dear and very strong one, I forgive
Thy year-worn cloak,[8] thine iron stringencies
That were but dandy upside-down, thy words
Of truth that, mildlier spoke had mainlier[9] wrought.

So, Buddha, beautiful! I pardon thee
That all the All thou hadst for needy man
Was Nothing, and thy Best of being was
But not to be.[10]

Worn Dante, I forgive
The implacable hates that in thy horrid hells
Or burn or freeze thy fellows, never loosed
By death, nor time, nor love.[11]

And I forgive
Thee, Milton, those thy comic-dreadful wars
Where, armed with gross and inconclusive steel,
Immortals smite immortals mortalwise
And fill all heaven with folly.[12]

Also thee,
Brave Æschylus, thee I forgive, for that
Thine eye, by bare bright justice basilisked,[13]
Turned not, nor ever learned to look where Love
Stands shining.

So, unto thee, Lucretius mine
(For oh! what heart hath loved thee like to this
That's now complaining?), freely I forgive
Thy logic poor, thine error rich, thine earth
Whose graves eat souls and all.[14]

Yea, all you hearts
Of beauty, and sweet righteous lovers large:
Aurelius[15] fine, oft superfine; mild Saint
A Kempis, overmild; Epictetus,
Whiles low in thought, still with old slavery tinct;
Rapt Behmen,[16] rapt too far; high Swedenborg,
O'ertoppling; Langley, that with but a touch
Of art hadst sung Piers Plowman to the top
Of English songs, whereof 'tis dearest now
And most adorable; Cædmon,[17] in the morn
A-calling angels with the cow-herd's call
That late brought up the cattle; Emerson,
Most wise, that yet, in finding Wisdom, lost
Thy Self, sometimes; tense Keats, with angel's nerves
Where men's were better; Tennyson, largest voice
Since Milton, yet some register[18] of wit
Wanting;—all, all, I pardon, ere 'tis asked,
Your more or less, your little mole that marks
You brother and your kinship seals to man.

But Thee, but Thee, O sovereign Seer of time,
But Thee, O poet's Poet, Wisdom's Tongue,
But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest,—
What *if* or *yet*, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumor, tattled by an enemy,

---

[8] Socrates seems to have taken pride in wearing shabby clothing.

[9] more effectively

[10] The highest spiritual state of the Buddhist is generally supposed to be absorption in the all-perfect, even as a drop of water is absorbed by the ocean. Buddha taught that perfection may be reached in this life when the cardinal sins die out in the heart. He did not himself teach the merging of the soul in God, or bliss in death. (See Ency. Brit. IV, 744.)

[11] Whatever Lanier's opinion, Dante was actuated by a stern sense of the unrelenting consequences of sin, not hatred.

[12] *Paradise Lost*, Bk. VI.

[13] Greek tragedy usually depicted the gods as avenging fates, influenced only by ideas of justice, not mercy. The basilisk, an imaginary monster of the ancients, struck mortals dead with the intensity of its glance.

[14] Lucretius, a Roman philosophical poet (96? B.C.-55 B.C.), author of *De Rerum Natura*. He did not believe in immortality.

[15] Marcus Aurelius (121-180), Roman Emperor, and Stoic philosopher wrote *Meditations*. Thomas à Kempis, 1380-1471, was author of *De Imitatione Christi*. Epictetus, born a slave, was a Greek Stoic philosopher of the first century.

[16] More correctly Jakob Böhme, or Böhm, 1575-1624, a German mystic. Swedenborg was a Swedish mystic, 1688-1772; and William Langland. 1330?-1400?, the supposed author of the *Vision of Piers Plowman*.

[17] The first English Christian poet, who possibly lived in the 7th century. From the fact that both Bede and Alfred, the only early writers mentioning him, refer to the care of the cattle having been given "for that night" to Cædmon, a secular monk in the monastery, it has become usual to say that he was a cowherd.

[18] compass, range

Of inference loose, what lack of grace,
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's—
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ?"
1880 1880

A BALLAD OF TREES AND THE MASTER

Into the woods my Master went,[1]
Clean forspent, forspent.
Into the woods my Master came,
Forspent with love and shame.
But the olives they were not blind to Him,
The little gray leaves were kind to Him:
The thorn-tree had a mind to Him
When into the woods He came.

Out of the woods my Master went,
And He was well content.
Out of the woods my Master came,
Content with death and shame.
When Death and Shame would woo Him last,
From under the trees they drew Him last:
'Twas on a tree they slew Him—last
When out of the woods He came.
1880 1880

SUNRISE—A HYMN OF THE MARSHES[2]

In my sleep I was fain of their fellowship, fain
Of the live oak, the marsh, and the main.
The little green leaves would not let me alone in my sleep;
Up-breathed from the marshes, a message of range and of sweep,
Interwoven with waftures of wild sea-liberties, drifting,
Came through the lapped leaves sifting, sifting,
Came to the gates of sleep.
Then my thoughts, in the dark of the dungeon-keep
Of the Castle of Captives hid in the City of Sleep,
Upstarted, by twos and by threes assembling:
The gates of sleep fell a-trembling
Like as the lips of a lady that forth falter *yes*,
Shaken with happiness:
The gates of sleep stood wide.

I have waked, I have come, my beloved! I might not abide:
I have come ere the dawn, O beloved, my live-oaks, to hide
In your gospeling glooms,—to be
As a lover in heaven, the marsh, my marsh and the sea my sea.

Tell me, sweet burly-barked, man-bodied Tree
That mine arms in the dark are embracing, dost know
From what fount are these tears at thy feet which flow?
They rise not from reason, but deeper inconsequent deeps.
Reason's not one that weeps.
What logic of greeting lies
Betwixt dear over-beautiful trees and the rain of the eyes?

O cunning green leaves, little masters! like as ye gloss
All the dull-tissued dark with your luminous darks that emboss
The vague blackness of night into pattern and plan,
So
(But would I could know, but would I could know),
With your question embroid'ring the dark of the question of man,—
So, with your silences purfling[3] this silence of man
While his cry to the dead for some knowledge is under the ban,
Under the ban,—
So, ye have wrought me
Designs on the night of our knowledge—yea, ye have taught me,
So,
That haply we know somewhat more than we know.

Ye lispers, whisperers, singers in storms,
Ye consciences murmuring faiths under forms,
Ye ministers meet for each passion that grieves,
Friendly, sisterly, sweetheart leaves,
Oh, rain me down from your darks that contain me
Wisdoms ye winnow from winds that pain me,—
Sift down tremors of sweet-within-sweet
That advise me of more than they bring,—repeat
Me the woods-smell that swiftly but now brought breath

---

[1] *Matthew* xxvi. 36, ff.
[2] This was the last poem completed by Lanier.
[3] decorating, as the border of a violin may be decorated with inlaid work

From the heaven-side bank of the river of death,—
Teach me the terms of silence,—preach me
The passion of patience,—sift me,—impeach me,—
And there, oh there
As ye hang with your myriad palms upturned in the air,
Pray me a myriad prayer.

My gossip, the owl, is it thou
That out of the leaves of the low-hanging bough,
As I pass to the beach, art stirred?
Dumb woods, have ye uttered a bird?

* * *

Reverend Marsh, low-couched along the sea,
Old chemist, rapt in alchemy,
Distilling silence,—lo,
That which our father-age had died to know—
The menstruum[4] that dissolves all matter—thou
Hast found it: for this silence, filling now
The globéd clarity of receiving space,
This solves us all: man, matter, doubt, disgrace,
Death, love, sin, sanity,
Must in yon silence' clear solution lie.
Too clear! That crystal nothing who'll peruse?
The blackest night could bring us brighter news.
Yet precious qualities of silence haunt
Round these vast margins, ministrant.
Oh, if thy soul's at latter gasp for space,
With trying to breathe no bigger than thy race
Just to be fellow'd, when that thou hast found
No man with room, or grace enough of bound
To entertain that New thou tell'st, thou art,—
'Tis here, 'tis here thou canst unhand thy heart
And breathe it free, and breathe it free,
By rangy marsh, in lone sea-liberty.

The tide's at full: the marsh with flooded streams
Glimmers, a limpid labyrinth of dreams.
Each winding creek in grave entrancement lies
A rhapsody of morning-stars. The skies
Shine scant with one forked galaxy,—
The marsh brags ten; looped on his breast they lie.
Oh, what if a sound should be made!
Oh, what if a bound should be laid
To this bow-and-string tension of beauty and silence a-spring,—
To the bend of beauty the bow, or the hold of silence the string!
I fear me, I fear me yon dome of diaphanous gleam
Will break as a bubble o'er-blown in a dream,—
Yon dome of too tenuous tissues of space and of night,
Overweighted with stars, overfreighted with light,
Oversated with beauty and silence, will seem
But a bubble that broke in a dream,
If a bound of degree to this grace be laid
Or a sound or a motion made.

But no: it is made: list! somewhere—mystery, where?
In the leaves? in the air?
In my heart? is a motion made:
'Tis a motion of dawn, like a flicker of shade on shade.
In the leaves 'tis palpable; low multitudinous stirring
Upwinds through the woods; the little ones, softly conferring,
Have settled my lord's to be looked for; so; they are still;
But the air and my heart and the earth are a-thrill,—
And look where the wild duck sails round the bend of the river,—
And look where a passionate shiver
Expectant is bending the blades
Of the marsh-grass in serial shimmers and shades,—
And invisible wings, fast fleeting, fast fleeting,
Are beating
The dark overhead as my heart beats,—and steady and free
Is the ebb-tide flowing from marsh to sea—
(Run home, little streams,
With your lapfuls of stars and dreams),
And a sailor unseen is hoisting a-peak,
For list, down the inshore curve of the creek
How merrily flutters the sail,—
And lo, in the East! Will the East unveil?
The East is unveiled, the East hath confessed

---

[4] solvent

A flush: 'tis dead; 'tis alive: 'tis dead, ere the West
Was aware of it: nay, 'tis abiding, 'tis unwithdrawn:
Have a care, sweet Heaven! 'Tis Dawn.

Now a dream of a flame through that dream of a flush is uprolled:
To the zenith ascending, a dome of undazzling gold
Is builded, in shape as a bee-hive, from out of the sea:
The hive is of gold undazzling, but oh, the Bee,
The star-fed Bee, the build-fire Bee,
Of dazzling gold is the great Sun-Bee
That shall flash from the hive-hole over the sea.

Yet now the dew-drop, now the morning gray,
Shall live their little lucid sober day
Ere with the sun their souls exhale away.
Now in each pettiest personal sphere of dew
The summ'd morn shines complete as in the blue
Big dew-drop of all heaven. With these lit shrines
O'er silvered to the farthest sea-confines,
The sacramental marsh one pious plain
Of worship lies. Peace to the ante-reign
Of Mary Morning, blissful mother mild,
Minded of naught but peace, and of a child.

Not slower than Majesty moves, for a mean and a measure
Of motion, not faster than dateless Olympian leisure
Might pace with unblown ample garments from pleasure to pleasure,—
The wave-serrate sea-rim sinks unjarring, unreeling,
Forever revealing, revealing, revealing,
Edgewise, bladewise, halfwise, wholewise,—'tis done!
Good-morrow, lord Sun!
With several voice, with ascription[5] one,
The woods and the marsh and the sea and my soul
Unto thee, whence the glittering stream of all morrows doth roll,
Cry good and past-good, and most heavenly morrow, lord Sun.

O Artisan born in the purple,—Workman Heat,
Parter of passionate atoms that travail to meet
And be mixed in the death-cold oneness, innermost Guest
At the marriage of elements,—Fellow of publicans,—blest
King in the blouse of flame, that loiterest o'er
The idle skies yet laborest fast evermore,—
Thou, in the fine forge-thunder, thou, in the beat
Of the heart of a man, thou Motive,—Laborer Heat:
Yea, Artist, thou, of whose art yon sea's all news,
With his inshore greens and manifold mid-sea blues,
Pearl-glint, shell-tint, ancientest perfectest hues
Ever shaming the maidens,—lily and rose
Confess thee, and each mild flame that glows
In the clarified virginal bosoms of stones that shine,
It is thine, it is thine:

Thou chemist of storms, whether driving the winds a-swirl
Or a-flicker the subtiler essences polar that whirl
In the magnet earth,—yea, thou with a storm for a heart,
Rent with debate, many-spotted with question, part
From part oft sundered, yet ever a globéd light,
Yet ever the artist, ever more large and bright
Than the eye of a man may avail of:—manifold One,
I must pass from thy face, I must pass from the face of the Sun:
Old Want is awake and agog, every wrinkle a-frown;
The worker must pass to his work in the terrible town:
But I fear not, nay, and I fear not the thing to be done;
I am strong with the strength of my lord the Sun:
How dark, how dark soever the race that must needs be run,
I am lit with the Sun.

Oh, never the mast-high run of the seas
Of traffic shall hide thee,
Never the hell-colored smoke of the factories

---

[5] homage, tribute

Hide thee,
Never the reek of the time's fen-politics
Hide thee,
And ever my heart through the night shall
with knowledge abide thee,
And ever by day shall my spirit, as one
that hath tried thee,
Labor, at leisure, in art,—till yonder beside thee
My soul shall float, friend Sun,
The day being done.

1880 1882

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

Born, Amherst, Massachusetts, 1831, died, San Francisco, California, 1885. Helen Maria Fiske married, first, Captain Hunt of the United States Army, who died in 1863, and, later, William Jackson of Colorado Springs, Colorado. She was appointed in 1883 special commissioner to investigate the conditions of the Indians of southern California. Her books include *Verses by H. H.*, 1870; *A Century of Dishonor*, 1881; *Ramona*, 1884; *Sonnets and Lyrics*, 1886.

SPINNING *

Like a blind spinner in the sun,
I tread my days;
I know that all the threads will run
Appointed ways;
I know each day will bring its task,
And, being blind, no more I ask.

I do not know the use or name
Of that I spin:
I only know that some one came,
And laid within
My hand the thread, and said, "Since you
Are blind, but one thing you can do."

Sometimes the threads so rough and fast
And tangled fly,
I know wild storms are sweeping past,
And fear that I
Shall fall; but dare not try to find
A safer place, since I am blind.

I know not why, but I am sure
That tint and place,
In some great fabric to endure
Past time and race
My threads will have; so from the first,
Though blind, I never felt accurst.

I think, perhaps, this trust has sprung
From one short word
Said over me when I was young,—
So young, I heard
It, knowing not that God's name signed
My brow, and sealed me His, though blind.

But whether this be seal or sign
Within, without,
It matters not. The bond divine
I never doubt.
I know He set me here, and still,
And glad, and blind, I wait His will;

But listen, listen, day by day,
To hear their tread
Who bear the finished web away,
And cut the thread,
And bring God's message in the sun,
"Thou poor blind spinner, work is done."

1874

OCTOBER *

Bending above the spicy woods which blaze,
Arch skies so blue they flash, and hold the
sun
Immeasurably far; the waters run
Too slow, so freighted are the river-ways
With gold of elms and birches from the
maze
Of forests. Chestnuts, clicking one by one,
Escape from satin burs; her fringes done,
The gentian spreads them out in sunny
days,
And, like late revelers at dawn, the chance
Of one sweet, mad, last hour, all things
assail,
And conquering, flush and spin; while, to
enhance
The spell, by sunset door, wrapped in a veil
Of red and purple mists, the summer, pale,
Steals back alone for one more song and
dance.

CORONATION *

At the king's gate the subtle noon
Wove filmy yellow nets of sun;
Into the drowsy snare too soon
The guards fell one by one.

Through the king's gate, unquestioned then,
A beggar went, and laughed, "This
brings
Me chance, at last, to see if men
Fare better, being kings!"

The king sat bowed beneath his crown,
Propping his face with listless hand;
Watching the hour-glass sifting down
Too slow its shining sand.

"Poor man, what wouldst thou have of
me?"
The beggar turned, and, pitying,

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Replied, like one in dream, "Of thee,
Nothing. I want the king."

Uprose the king, and from his head
Shook off the crown and threw it by.
"O man, thou must have known," he said,
"A greater king than I."

Through all the gates, unquestioned then,
Went king and beggar hand in hand.
Whispered the king, "Shall I know when
Before *his* throne I stand?"

The beggar laughed. Free winds in haste
Were wiping from the king's hot brow
The crimson lines the crown had traced.
"This is his presence now."

At the King's gate, the crafty noon
Unwove its yellow nets of sun;
Out of their sleep in terror soon
The guards waked one by one.

"Ho here! Ho there! Has no man seen
The king?" The cry ran to and fro;
Beggar and king, they laughed, I ween,
The laugh that free men know.

On the king's gate the moss grew gray;
The king came not. They called him dead;
And made his eldest son one day
Slave in his father's stead.

EMILY DICKINSON[1]

Born, Amherst, Massachusetts, 1830, died there, 1886. Miss Dickinson's life seems almost devoid of outward events. She lived in retirement, known to but a few intimate friends. During her life but one of her poems was published, but since her death three series, beginning with 1890, have been edited and published.

THIS IS MY LETTER

This is my letter to the world,
That never wrote to me,—
The simple news that Nature told,
With tender majesty.

Her message is committed
To hands I cannot see;
For love of her, sweet countrymen,
Judge tenderly of me!

OUR SHARE OF NIGHT TO BEAR

Our share of night to bear,
Our share of morning,
Our blank in bliss to fill,
Our blank in scorning.

Here a star, and there a star,
Some lose their way.
Here a mist, and there a mist,
Afterwards—day!

I HAD NO TIME TO HATE

I had no time to hate, because
The grave would hinder me,
And life was not so ample I
Could finish enmity.

Nor had I time to love; but since
Some industry must be,
The little toil of love, I thought,
Was large enough for me.

ALTER? WHEN THE HILLS DO

Alter? When the hills do.
Falter? When the sun
Question if his glory
Be the perfect one.

Surfeit? When the daffodil
Doth of the dew:
Even as herself, O friend!
I will of you!

IN VAIN[1]

I cannot live with you,
It would be life,
And life is over there
Behind the shelf

The sexton keeps the key to,
Putting up
Our life, his porcelain,
Like a cup

Discarded of the housewife,
Quaint or broken;
A newer Sèvres pleases,
Old ones crack.

I could not die with you,
For one must wait

---

[1] James Muirhead in *America the Land of Contrasts*, calls Miss Dickinson an example of the American in literature, and thinks her "full as national a type as Mr. Howells." "The subjects of her poems are few, but the piercing delicacy and depth of vision with which she turned from death and eternity to nature and to love make us feel the presence of that rare thing, genius. Hers is a wonderful instance of the way in which genius can dispense with experience; she sees more by pure intuition than others distil from the serried facts of an eventful life."

[1] Cf. Christina Rossetti's sonnet: *"Many in aftertimes will say of you—"*

To shut the other's gaze down,—
You could not.

And I, could I stand by
And see you freeze,
Without my right of frost,
Death's privilege?

Nor could I rise with you,
Because your face
Would put out Jesus',
That new grace

Glow plain and foreign
On my homesick eye,
Except that you, than he
Shone closer by.

They'd judge us—how?
For you served Heaven, you know,
Or sought to;
I could not,

Because you saturated sight,
And I had no more eyes
For sordid excellence
As Paradise.

And were you lost, I would be,
Though my name
Rang loudest
On the heavenly fame.

And were you saved,
And I condemned to be
Where you were not,
That self were hell to me.

So we must keep apart,
You there, I here,
With just the door ajar
That oceans are,
And prayer,
And that pale sustenance,
Despair!

RENUNCIATION

There came a day at summer's full
Entirely for me;
I thought that such were for the saints,
Where revelations be.

The sun, as common, went abroad,
The flowers, accustomed, blew,
As if no soul the solstice passed
That maketh all things new.

The time was scarce profaned by speech;
The symbol of a word
Was needless, as at sacrament
The wardrobe of our Lord.

Each was to each the sealed church,
Permitted to commune this time,
Lest we too awkward show,
At supper of the Lamb.

The hours slid fast, as hours will,
Clutched tight by greedy hands;
So faces on two decks look back,
Bound to opposing lands.

And so, when all the time had failed,
Without external sound,
Each bound the other's crucifix,
We gave no other bond.

Sufficient troth that we shall rise—
Deposed, at length, the grave—
To that new marriage, justified
Through Calvaries of Love!

A SERVICE OF SONG

Some keep the Sabbath going to church;
I keep it staying at home,
With a bobolink for a chorister,
And an orchard for a dome.

Some keep the Sabbath in surplice;
I just wear my wings,
And instead of tolling the bell for church,
Our little sexton sings.

God preaches,—a noted clergyman,—
And the sermon is never long;
So instead of getting to heaven at last,
I'm going all along!

A DAY

I'll tell you how the sun rose,—
A ribbon at a time.
The steeples swam in amethyst,
The news like squirrels ran.

The hills untied their bonnets,
The bobolinks begun.
Then I said softly to myself,
"That must have been the sun!"

* * *

But how he set, I know not.
There seemed a purple stile
Which little yellow boys and girls
Were climbing all the while

Till when they reached the other side,
A dominie in gray
Put gently up the evening bars,
And led the flock away.

AUTUMN

The morns are meeker than they were,
The nuts are getting brown;
The berry's cheek is plumper,
The rose is out of town.

The maple wears a gayer scarf,
The field a scarlet gown.
Lest I should be old-fashioned,
I'll put a trinket on.

I NEVER SAW A MOOR

I never saw a moor,
I never saw the sea;
Yet know I how the heather looks,
And what a wave must be.

I never spoke with God,
Nor visited in heaven;
Yet certain am I of the spot
As if the chart were given.

I'M NOBODY! WHO ARE YOU?

I'm nobody! who are you?
Are you nobody, too?
Then there's a pair of us—don't tell!
They'd banish us, you know.

How dreary to be somebody!
How public, like a frog
To tell your name the livelong day
To an admiring bog!

WE PLAY AT PASTE

We play at paste,
Till qualified for pearl,
Then drop the paste,
And deem ourself a fool.
The shapes, though, were similar,
And our new hands
Learned gem-tactics
Practising sands.

THE TEST

I can wade grief,
Whole pools of it,—
I'm used to that.
But the least push of joy
Breaks up my feet,
And I tip—drunken.
Let no pebble smile,
'Twas the new liquor,—
That was all!
Power is only pain,
Stranded, through discipline,
Till weights will hang.
Give balm to giants,
And they'll wilt, like men.
Give Himmaleh,—
They'll carry him!

SURGEONS MUST BE VERY CAREFUL

Surgeons must be very careful
When they take the knife!
Underneath their fine incisions
Stirs the culprit,—Life!

THE SHOW

The show is not the show,
But they that go.
Menagerie to me
My neighbor be.
Fair play—
Both went to see.

SECRETS

The skies can't keep their secret!
They tell it to the hills—
The hills just tell the orchards—
And they the daffodils!

A bird, by chance, that goes that way
Soft overheard the whole.
If I should bribe the little bird,
Who knows but she would tell?

I think I won't, however,
It's finer not to know;
If summer were an axiom,
What sorcery had snow?

So keep your secret, Father!
I would not, if I could,
Know what the sapphire fellows do,
In your new-fashioned world!

THE SEA

An everywhere of silver,
With ropes of sand
To keep it from effacing
The track called land.

SIMPLICITY

How happy is the little stone
That rambles in the road alone,
And doesn't care about careers,
And exigencies never fears;
Whose coat of elemental brown
A passing universe put on;
And independent as the sun,
Associates or glows alone,
Fulfilling absolute decree
In casual simplicity.

I READ MY SENTENCE STEADILY

I read my sentence steadily,
Reviewed it with my eyes,
To see that I made no mistake
In its extremest clause,—

The date, and manner of the shame;
And then the pious form
That "God have mercy" on the soul
The jury voted him.

I made my soul familiar
With her extremity,
That at the last it should not be
A novel agony,

But she and Death, acquainted,
Meet tranquilly as friends,
Salute and pass without a hint—
And there the matter ends.

WHAT INN IS THIS?

What inn is this[1]
Where for the night
Peculiar traveler comes?
Who is the landlord?
Where the maids?
Behold, what curious rooms!
No ruddy fires on the hearth,
No brimming tankards flow.
Necromancer, landlord,
Who are these below?

FORBIDDEN FRUIT. I

Forbidden fruit a flavor has
That lawful orchards mocks;
How luscious lies the pea within
The pod that Duty locks!

FORBIDDEN FRUIT. II

Heaven is what I cannot reach!
The apple on the tree,
Provided it do hopeless hang,
That "heaven" is, to me.

The color on the cruising cloud,
The interdicted ground
Behind the hill, the house behind,—
There Paradise is found!

A WORD

A word is dead
When it is said,
Some say.

I say it just
Begins to live
That day.

PARTING

My life closed twice before its close;
It yet remains to see
If Immortality unveil
A third event to me,

So huge, so hopeless to conceive,
As these that twice befell.
Parting is all we know of heaven,
And all we need of hell.

WHAT SOFT, CHERUBIC CREATURES

What soft, cherubic creatures
These gentlewomen are!
One would as soon assault a plush
Or violate a star.

Such dimity convictions,
A horror so refined
Of freckled human nature,
Of Deity ashamed,—

It's such a common glory,
A fisherman's degree!
Redemption, brittle lady,
Be so, ashamed of thee.

TO MAKE A PRAIRIE

To make a prairie it takes a clover
and one bee,—
One clover, and a bee,
And revery.
The revery alone will do
If bees are few.

WE NEVER KNOW WE GO

We never know we go,—when we are going
We jest and shut the door;
Fate following behind us bolts it,
And we accost no more.

ETERNITY

On this wondrous sea,
Sailing silently,
Ho! pilot, ho!
Knowest thou the shore
Where no breakers roar,
Where the storm is o'er?

In the silent west
Many sails at rest,
Their anchors fast;
Thither I pilot thee,—
Land, ho! Eternity!
Ashore at last!

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[1] Cf. Christina Rossetti's *Uphill.*

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

From American literature, only the works selected for the body of the book are included, and from English literature only chief works, or those especially interesting in respect to American writings. The dates are those of publication, unless otherwise noted. In the case of American poems especially, the titles of the works in which they appeared are usually given rather than the titles of the selections themselves.

1601—1610

AMERICAN	ENGLISH
	1602 Shakspere: *Hamlet; Twelfth Night* (acted).
	1603 Jonson: *Sejanus.*
	Elizabeth died, 1603
	1605 Bacon: *Advancement of Learning.*
Jamestown founded, 1607	
1608 J. Smith: *A True Relation.*	
	1610 Beaumont and Fletcher: *Knight of the Burning Pestle.*
	1610 Shakspere: *Macbeth* (acted).

1611—1620

	1611 Shakspere: *Winter's Tale* (acted).
	Bible, Authorized Version, printed, 1611
	1612 Bacon: *Essays* (first edition, 1597).
	1614 Raleigh: *History of the World.*
	Shakspere died, 1616
Plymouth Colony founded, 1620	1620 Bacon: *Novum Organum.*

1621—1630

	1623 Shakspere: *Plays* (first folio edition).
1624 J. Smith: *The General History of Virginia.*	1624 Webster: *Duchess of Malfi.*
1625 Strachey: *A True Reportory of the Wrack.*	1625 Purchas: *Hakluyt's Posthumus.*
	1627 Drayton: *Battle of Agincourt.*
Massachusetts Bay Colony founded, 1630	1630 Quarles: *Divine Poems.*
1630 Bradford: *History of Plimoth Plantation* begun about this time.	
1630 Winthrop: *Journal* begun, ended 1649.	

1631—1640

	1633 Massinger: *New Way to Pay Old Debts.*
	1634 Crashaw: *Epigrammata Sacra.*
	1634 Milton: *Comus* (acted).
1635 R. Mather: *Journal* (written).	
Harvard College established, 1636	
Providence founded, 1636	
Anne Hutchinson banished, 1637	Trial of John Hampden, 1638
New Haven founded, 1638	1638 Milton: *Lycidas.*
Printing press established, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1639	1639 Webster: *Appius and Virginia.*
1640 *The Bay Psalm Book.*	

1641—1650

	1642 Browne: *Religio Medici.*
1644 Williams: *The Bloudy Tenent.*	1644 Milton: *Areopagitica.*
	Battle of Marston Moor, 1644
	1645 Waller: *Poems.*
1647 N. Ward: *The Simple Cobler.*	1647 Taylor: *Liberty of Prophesying.*
	1648 Herrick: *Hesperides.*
	Charles I. executed, 1649
1650 A. Bradstreet: *Poems.*	1650 Baxter: *The Saints' Everlasting Rest.*

1651—1660

AMERICAN	ENGLISH
	1651 Taylor: *Holy Dying.*
	1653 Walton: *The Compleat Angler.*
1654 Johnson: *Wonder-Working Providence.*	
	1656 Davenant: *The Siege of Rhodes.*
	THE MONARCHY RESTORED, 1660
	1660 Pepys: *Diary* begun, ended 1669.
	1660 Dryden: *Astrea Redux.*

1661—1670

AMERICAN	ENGLISH
1662 Wigglesworth: *The Day of Doom.*	
	1663 Butler: *Hudibras,* Pt. I.
	1663 Dryden: *The Wild Gallant.*
	LONDON FIRE, 1666
	1667 Milton: *Paradise Lost.*
	1667 Dryden: *Annus Mirabilis.*

1671—1680

AMERICAN	ENGLISH
	1671 Milton: *Paradise Regained.*
	1671 Milton: *Samson Agonistes.*
	1672 Dryden: *Conquest of Granada.*
1673 Sewall: *Diary* begun, ended 1729.	
	MILTON DIED, 1674
	1678 Bunyan: *Pilgrim's Progress.*

1681—1690

AMERICAN	ENGLISH
1681 C. Mather: *Diary* begun.	1681 Dryden: *Absalom and Achitophel.*
PHILADELPHIA FOUNDED, 1682	1682 Dryden: *MacFlecknoe.*
	1682 Otway: *Venice Preserved.*
The New England Primer probably first published in this decade.	1687 Newton: *Principia.*
KING WILLIAM'S WAR, 1689	THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION, 1688
	1690 Locke: *Essay Concerning the Human Understanding.*

1691—1700

AMERICAN	ENGLISH
SALEM WITCHCRAFT TRIALS, 1692	
	1697 Congreve: *The Mourning Bride.*
	1697 Dryden: *Alexander's Feast.*
	1698 Collier: *Short View of the Immorality and Prophaneness of the Stage.*
	1700 Congreve: *The Way of the World.*

1701—1710

AMERICAN	ENGLISH
YALE COLLEGE ESTABLISHED, 1701	1701 Defoe: *The True-Born Englishman.*
QUEEN ANNE'S WAR, 1702-13	
1702 C. Mather: *Magnalia Christi Americana.*	
BOSTON NEWS LETTER ESTABLISHED, 1704	1704 Swift: *Tale of a Tub.*
1704-05 S. Knight: *Journal* (written).	1704 Clarendon: *History of the Great Rebellion.*
	1709 Pope: *Pastorals.*
	1709 Steele and Addison: *The Tatler* begun.

1711—1720

AMERICAN	ENGLISH
	1711 Steele and Addison: *The Spectator* begun.
	1712 Pope: *The Rape of the Lock.*
	1713 Addison: *Cato.*
	1715 Gay: *Poems.*
1716 Church: *King Philip's War.*	1715 Pope: *Translation of the Iliad.*
	1718 Prior: *Poems.*
	1719 Defoe: *Robinson Crusoe.*

	AMERICAN		ENGLISH
	1721—1730		
		1721	Ramsay: *Poems.*
1722	Edwards: *Diary* begun.	1722	Defoe: *Journal of the Plague Year.*
		1725	Pope: *Edition of Shakspere.*
		1726	Swift: *Gulliver's Travels.*
		1726	Thomson: *Winter.*
1728	Byrd: *History of the Dividing Line* (written)	1728	Gay: *Beggar's Opera.*
		1728	Pope: *Dunciad.*
	1731—1740		
1732	Byrd: *Progress to the Mines* (written).	1732	Pope: *Essay on Man.*
1733	Franklin: *Poor Richard's Almanac* (begun).		
		1737	Shenstone: *The Schoolmistress.*
		1738	Johnson: *London.*
		1740	Richardson: *Pamela.*
	1741—1750		
1741	Edwards: *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.*	1741	Hume: *Essays, Moral and Political.*
		1742	Fielding: *Joseph Andrews.*
		1742	Young: *Night Thoughts.*
		1743	Blair: *The Grave.*
		1747	Gray: *Ode on Eton College.*
		1748	Richardson: *Clarissa Harlowe.*
		1749	Fielding: *Tom Jones.*
		1750	Johnson: *The Rambler* (begun).
	1751—1760		
		1751	Gray: *Elegy . . Country Churchyard.*
		1753	Smollett: *Ferdinand, Count Fathom.*
		1753	Hume: *Essays and Treatises.*
		1755	Johnson: *English Dictionary.*
1756	Woolman: *Journal* (begun).		
1758	Franklin: *The Way to Wealth* in *Poor Richard's Almanac.*		
		1759	Sterne: *Tristram Shandy.*
		1759	Johnson: *Rasselas.*
	1761—1770		
		1762	Macpherson: *The Poems of Ossian.*
		1764	Walpole: *The Castle of Otranto.*
1765	Godfrey: *Juvenile Poems* (with the *Prince of Parthia,* the first American drama).	1765	Percy: *Reliques of Ancient Poetry.*
	The Stamp Act, 1765		
		1766	Goldsmith: *The Vicar of Wakefield.*
		1768	Sterne: *Sentimental Journey.*
		1770	Goldsmith: *The Deserted Village.*
	1771—1780		
1771	Franklin: *Autobiography,* first part, written.	1771	*Encyclopædia Britannica,* first edition.
1772	Trumbull: *Progress of Dulness,* part I.		
1773	P. Wheatley: *Poems.*	1773	Goldsmith: *She Stoops to Conquer.*
		1774	Chesterfield: *Letters to his Son.*
1775	Trumbull: *M'Fingal.*	1775	Burke: *Speech on Conciliation.*
1775	Henry: *Speech* in the Virginia Convention.	1775	Sheridan: *The Rivals.*
	The Declaration of Independence, 1776		
1776	Paine: *Common Sense.*	1776	Gibbon: *History—Decline and Fall . . Roman Empire.*
1778	F. Hopkinson: *Battle of the Kegs.*		
		1779	Johnson: *Lives of the Poets.*
1780	Franklin: *Dialogue between Franklin and the Gout.*		
	1781—1790		
	The Treaty of Paris, 1783	1783	Crabbe: *The Village.*
		1784	Beckford: *Vathek.*
1785	Dwight: *The Conquest of Canaan.*	1785	Cowper: *The Task.*
1786	Freneau: *Poems.*	1786	Burns: *Poems.*
1788	Dwight: *The Triumph of Infidelity.*		
1789	Franklin: *Autobiography,* second part, written.	1789	Blake: *Songs of Innocence.*
		1790	Burke: *Thoughts on the Revolution in France.*

1791—1800

	AMERICAN		ENGLISH
		1791	Boswell: *Life of Dr. Johnson.*
		1793	Godwin: *Inquiry concerning Political Justice.*
		1794	Radcliffe: *Mysteries of Udolpho.*
		1795	Lewis: *The Monk.*
1796	Barlow: *Hasty Pudding.*		
1796	Washington: *Farewell Address.*		
1798	Brown: *Wieland.*	1798	Wordsworth and Coleridge: *Lyrical Ballads.*
1798	J. Hopkinson: *Hail Columbia.*		

1801—1810

	AMERICAN		ENGLISH
1801	Jefferson: *Inaugural Address.*		
		1805	Scott: *Lay of the Last Minstrel.*
1806	Franklin: *Works.*		
		1808	Scott: *Marmion.*
1809	Irving: *Knickerbocker's History of New York.*	1809	Byron: *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.*
		1809	Edgeworth: *Tales of Fashionable Life.*
		1810	Scott: *Lady of the Lake.*

1811—1820

	AMERICAN		ENGLISH
		1811	Austen: *Sense and Sensibility.*
		1812	Byron: *Childe Harold,* I, II.
	War with England, 1812-1814	1814	Scott: *Waverley.*
		1814	Wordsworth: *Excursion.*
1814	Key: *Star Spangled Banner.*		
1815	Freneau: *Poems.*		
c1815	Wilde: *My Life is like the Summer Rose.*		
		1816	Coleridge: *Christabel.*
1817	Bryant: *Thanatopsis.*	1817	Moore: *Lalla Rookh.*
1819	Irving: *Sketch Book.*	1819	Byron: *Don Juan* I, II.
1819	Drake: *The American Flag.*	1820	Keats: *Poems.*
		1820	Shelley: *Prometheus Unbound.*

1821—1830

	AMERICAN		ENGLISH
1821	Bryant: *Poems.*	1821	De Quincey: *Confessions of an Opium Eater.*
		1821	Scott: *Kenilworth.*
		1821	Shelley: *Adonais.*
1822	Irving: *Bracebridge Hall.*		
1823	Payne: *Home, Sweet Home.*		
1823	Cooper: *The Pilot.*		
		1824	Lamb: *Essays of Elia.*
		1824	Landor: *Imaginary Conversations.*
1825	Pinkney: *Rodolph and Other Poems.*	1825	Macaulay: *Essay on Milton.*
c1825	Dickson: *I Sigh for the Land of the Cypress and Pine.*		
1826	Woodworth: *Old Oaken Bucket.*		
1827	Cooper: *The Prairie.*	1827	A. and C. Tennyson: *Poems by Two Brothers.*
1827	Simms: *Lyrical and Other Poems.*		
1827	R. H. Dana: *Poems.*		
1827	Drake: *Alnwick Castle and Other Poems.*		
1829	Jefferson: *Correspondence and Miscellanies.*		
		1830	Tennyson: *Poems Chiefly Lyrical.*

1831—1840

	AMERICAN		ENGLISH
1831	Poe: *Poems.*		
1832	Irving: *The Alhambra.*		
1832	S. Smith: *America.*		
		1833	Carlyle: *Sartor Resartus.*
		1833	Tennyson: *Poems.*
1834	Bancroft: *History of the United States,* Vol. I.	1834	Bulwer: *Last Days of Pompeii.*
1835	Drake: *The Culprit Fay and Other Poems.*	1835	Browning: *Paracelsus.*
1835	Simms: *The Yemassee.*		
1835	Willis: *Pencilings by the Way.*		
1836	Holmes: *Poems.*	1836	Dickens: *Pickwick.*
1836	Franklin: *Works,* Sparks ed.	1836	Marryat: *Midshipman Easy.*
1837	Hawthorne: *Twice-Told Tales.*	1837	Carlyle: *French Revolution.*
1837	Whittier: *Poems.*		
1839	Poe: *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque.*		
1839	Longfellow: *Voices of the Night.*		
1839	Very: *Essays and Poems.*		
1840	R. H. Dana, Jr.: *Two Years Before the Mast.*	1840	Dickens: *Old Curiosity Shop.*
1840	Furness: *Manual of Domestic Worship.*		

1841—1850

	AMERICAN		ENGLISH
1841	Cooper: *Deerslayer.*	1841	Carlyle: *Heroes and Hero-Worship.*
1841	Emerson: *Essays,* first series.		
1841	Longfellow: *Ballads and Other Poems.*		
		1842	Browning: *Dramatic Lyrics.*
1843	Willis: *Poems of Passion.*	1843	Macaulay: *Essays.*
1843	Prescott: *Conquest of Mexico.*	1843	Ruskin: *Modern Painters,* I.
1844	Emerson: *Essays,* second series.	1844	E. B. Browning: *Poems.*
1844	Lowell: *Poems.*		
1845	Sumner: *The True Grandeur of Nations.*		
1845	Poe: *The Raven and Other Poems.*		
1846	Hawthorne: *Mosses from an Old Manse.*	1846	Dickens: *Dombey and Son.*
	THE WAR WITH MEXICO, 1846-1848		
1846	Taylor: *Views Afoot.*		
1846	Melville: *Typee.*		
1847	Emerson: *Poems.*	1847	Tennyson: *The Princess.*
1847	Longfellow: *Evangeline.*	1847	Thackeray: *Vanity Fair.*
1847	O'Hara: *Bivouac of the Dead.*	1847	C. Bronte: *Jane Eyre.*
1848	Lowell: *Biglow Papers, I.*	1848	Macaulay: *History of England, I, II.*
1848	Lowell: *Vision of Sir Launfal.*		
1848	Lowell: *A Fable for Critics.*		
1849	G. Ticknor: *History of Spanish Literature.*	1849	Thackeray: *Pendennis.*
1850	Whittier: *Songs of Labor.*	1850	Tennyson: *In Memoriam.*
1850	Longfellow: *The Seaside and the Fireside.*		
1850	Hawthorne: *The Scarlet Letter.*		

1851—1860

1851	Hawthorne: *The House of the Seven Gables.*	1851	E. B. Browning: *Casa Guidi Windows.*
1851	Parkman: *The Conspiracy of Pontiac.*		
1851	Taylor: *Romances, Lyrics and Songs.*		
		1852	Thackeray: *Henry Esmond.*
		1852	Wallace: *Travels on the Amazon.*
1853	Calhoun: *Works.*		
1853	Thoreau: *Walden.*		
1855	Whitman: *Leaves of Grass.*	1854	Thackeray: *The Newcomes.*
1855	Longfellow: *Hiawatha.*	1855	R. Browning: *Men and Women.*
1856	Story: *Poems.*	1855	Tennyson: *Maud.*
1856	Stoddard: *Songs of Summer.*	1856	E. B. Browning: *Aurora Leigh.*
1856	Motley: *The Rise of the Dutch Republic.*		
1856	Curtis: *Prue and I.*		
1858	Holmes: *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.*	1858	Carlyle: *History of Friedrich The Great, I, II.*
1859	Everett: *Orations and Speeches.*	1859	Darwin: *The Origin of Species.*
1860	Morris: *Poems.*	1859	G. Eliot (M. Evans): *Adam Bede.*

1861—1870

1861	Holmes: *Songs in Many Keys.*	1861	Reade: *The Cloister and the Hearth.*
	THE CIVIL WAR, 1861-1865		
1862-1866	Lowell: *Biglow Papers, II.*		
1862	Choate: *Works.*		
1863	Bryant: *Thirty Poems.*	1863	G. Eliot (M. Evans): *Romola.*
1863	Longfellow: *Tales of a Wayside Inn.*		
c1863	Thompson: *Music in Camp.*		
1864	Boker: *Poems of the War.*	1864	R. Browning: *Dramatis Personæ.*
		1864	Newman: *Apologia pro Vita Sua.*
		1864	Swinburne: *Atalanta in Calydon.*
		1864	Tennyson: *Enoch Arden.*
1865	M. Preston: *Beechenbrook.*		
1865	Whitman: *Drum Taps.*		
1866	Read: *Poems.*	1866	Ruskin: *A Crown of Wild Olive.*
1866	Whittier: *Snow-Bound.*		
1866	J. Howe: *Later Lyrics.*		
1867	Longfellow: *Divina Commedia* (translated).	1867	Arnold: *The Study of Celtic Literature.*
1867	Parsons: *Inferno* (translated).		
1868	Whittier: *Among the Hills.*	1868	R. Browning: *The Ring and the Book.*
1868	Hale: *The Man Without a Country and Other Tales.*		
		1869	Arnold: *Culture and Anarchy.*
		1870	D. G. Rossetti: *Poems.*

1871—1880

AMERICAN		ENGLISH	
1871	Lowell: *My Study Windows.*	1871	Swinburne: *Songs before Sunrise.*
		1871	Tennyson: *The Last Tournament.*
1872	Hayne: *Legends and Lyrics.*		
1873	Timrod: *Poems.*	1873	Arnold: *Literature and Dogma.*
1873	Pike: *Poems.*	1874	Green: *A Short History of the English People.*
1875	Hope: *Elegiac Ode and Other Poems.*	1875	R. Browning: *Aristophanes' Apology.*
		1875	Meredith: *Beauchamp's Career.*
		1876	Morris: *Sigurd the Volsung.*
		1876	Spencer: *Principles of Sociology.*
1877	Lanier: *Poems.*	1877	Tennyson: *Harold.*
1879	F. Ticknor: *Poems.*	1879	Arnold: *Mixed Essays.*
		1879	R. Browning: *Dramatic Idyls.*
1880	Ryan: *Poems.*		

1881—1890

AMERICAN		ENGLISH	
1881	Whittier: *The King's Missive.*	1881	D. G. Rossetti: *Ballads and Sonnets.*
		1882	Swinburne: *Tristram of Lyonesse.*
		1883	Carlyle: *Correspondence with Emerson.*
		1883	Stevenson: *Treasure Island.*
1886	H. Jackson: *Sonnets and Lyrics.*	1886	Tennyson: *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After.*
		1889	Pater: *Appreciations.*
		1889	R. Browning: *Asolando.*
			R. Browning died, 1889
1890	E. Dickinson: *Poems,* first series.		

1891—1900

AMERICAN		ENGLISH	
1891	Whitman: *Goodbye, My Fancy.*		
		1892	Tennyson: *Death of Œnone.*
			Tennyson died, 1892
1893	Curtis: *Orations and Address.*		
1894	Lincoln: *Works.*		

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Not all notes are indexed. Notes upon authors and titles may be found through the indexes to authors and titles. Yet in some cases slight references have been included, in order that any note may be easily returned to, if desired.

The glossary, which is here inserted in one alphabetical order with the index to notes, has been restricted to the items of most importance. Since practically every strange or archaic usage is explained as it occurs, it seems useless to repeat them all here, especially those that occur only once, or have only a contextual significance. But all such archaisms as are to be found widely scattered through our literature are given, with nearly always one or more references to illustrate their use.

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